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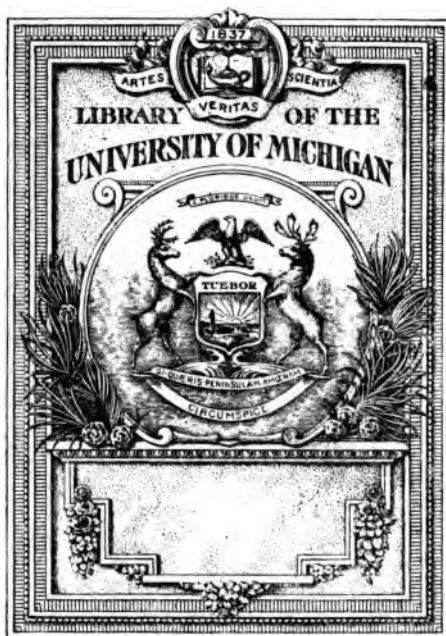
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The Jesuit's Ring

A ROMANCE OF MT. DESERT

BY

AUGUSTUS ALLEN HAYES

NEW YORK

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1888

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THE JESUIT'S RING

A ROMANCE OF MOUNT DESERT

BY

AUGUSTUS ALLEN HAYES

AUTHOR OF "THE DENVER EXPRESS," "A ROMANCE OF EASTHAMPTON,"
ETC., ETC.

NEW YORK

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PREFACE.

IN this story, the author has endeavored to draw attention to the dramatic history of early days on Mount Desert, and to connect them with the joyous doings of modern times. For a portion of the material used in the prologue, he is indebted to Mr. Parkman, whose learned and graceful pen is still, as heretofore, engaged in

“ Tingeing the sober twilight of the present,
With color of romance ; ”

also to Mr. S. A. Drake's charming book, *Nooks and Corners of the New England Coast*, which should be the *vade mecum* of all sojourners in those regions.

Nor can any one who attempts to write on the fascinating subject of the mystical city of Norumbega, fail to incur obligations to Mr. J. G. Whittier.

WASHINGTON, D. C., 1886.

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THE PROLOGUE;

A. D. 1613.



CHAPTER I.

At the Gate of the Chateau.

IT was a raw, cold day in March. Down the black and angry waters of the Seine great cakes of ice, crowding upon and crushing each other, scurried toward the sea. The bare branches of the trees in the dense surrounding forests tossed in the chill blast, and the roads lay deep in mud, and almost impassable. As night came on, the wayfarer could see the lights of the great Chateau shining at the end of a long avenue, and humbler ones in the windows of the little inn near the gates. Before the fire in the large chimney of the latter sat two men engaged in conversation, apparently of no very agreeable nature; for they shook their heads and sighed, as they smoked their long pipes. One was the landlord; the other, to judge from his appearance, a seafaring man.

"Right indeed are you, mine host," said the latter, after a pause. "These are sorry times for us and for France. Do you know that it is nearly three years since the accursed Ravailiac struck down our brave King Henry of Navarre?"

"Yes, indeed, master pilot," said the landlord, with a sigh. "And especially sad was it for us who worship the true God, and pray to Him rather than

to the Virgin Mary. Matters grow worse and worse with us, it seems to me ; and if the Queen and the court give, as they seem inclined, more and more power and influence to this great Society of Jesus, woe be to us poor Huguenots ! Who knows ? Perhaps the future has a new massacre of St. Bartholomew in store for us."

"Aye, I know that society, or rather that army, well. I have heard my old father speak of their great founder and general, Loyola ; and I have seen much of them on my voyages. What say you to an organization which enlists its soldiers for life, holds their souls and bodies under iron laws and rules, and sends them over land and sea, to the very ends of the world, without a possibility of their objecting or murmuring ; and then, when they die in the field, sends scores of fresh and willing recruits to take their places ? No wonder that they gain strength here in France, day by day, when the great people listen to their accounts of the mighty deeds they have done—and hear only one side of the story. Ah ! master landlord, I could tell you a different tale of what I have seen of these folk away beyond the seas. There was one of them, on our last voyage——"

"Hush !" said the landlord, in an alarmed whisper, "speak low. They are everywhere. Did you not hear steps approaching the door ?"

"No ; I heard nothing. But has it come to this, that a man cannot speak his mind in the privacy of his own or his friend's house ? I trow not, and if

one of these Jesuits were here, I would tell him so to his face."

"Hush!" again cried the landlord, "some of them may hear you. That surely was a noise outside. Yes, some one is coming." There was a knock at the door, and a man entered—a tall, thin man, clad in the close-fitting black robe and the black cap which were the uniform of the rigidly-disciplined followers of Loyola, the soldiers of that great ecclesiastical army, the members of the Society of Jesus. His face was pale, and his eyes shone brightly from under their long, thick lashes. He raised his hand in benediction as he entered.

"Peace be upon this house," said he, "and upon all who dwell therein! I pray you, master landlord, see that my horse has proper care, for I have ridden him far, this inclement day." He advanced to the fire, as the landlord went to the door to give his orders, and warmed his cold hands by the cheerful blaze. Then he turned toward the seafaring man, who had not stirred from his chair.

"Methinks I have seen you before, good master pilot," said he, in the same low, gentle tone in which he had just spoken. "Were you not with Vice-Admiral Biencourt on his voyage last year to New France?" The old sailor nodded. "I think I remember you. I was on board of the vessel sent by the Baron de Poutrincourt with provisions for the colony at Port Royal. I think you helped unload her. Then, too, you were surely with me on the ship which, after a long and stormy passage,

landed me on the shores of France." The old seaman turned and looked the Jesuit in the face.

"Yes;" said he, "I remember you now."

"It may be," said the other, "that you would again tempt the seas, as may I. A fine, staunch vessel, of full one hundred tons burthen, will soon sail for the New World. She will be bountifully equipped, and commanded by the noble Captain La Saussaye. I would gladly see your name enrolled in the ship's company, and secure your services, the value of which I well know."

"Thank you," said the seaman, "but I must remain at home for a time, and when I do sail it must be for the Huguenot merchants of Dieppe, Du Jardin and Du Quesne." The Jesuit gave his shoulders an almost imperceptible shrug. "As you will," said he, gently. "Ah! here you are, master landlord. Have you cared for my horse? I must ride him home to-night, when I return from the Chateau. I know not how long I shall be detained there. For the present, then, good masters, I bid you adieu," and, with noiseless step, he left the room. The seaman drew a long breath.

"By my faith," cried he, "I breathe more freely when he is gone. Not that he is a bad one of his kind, by any means, but I mistrust and fear them all. I believe they would burn me—and you too, friend,—with the keenest pleasure; and when he was looking at me, with those deep eyes of his, I had a sort of creeping feeling come over me."

"You know him, then?"

"Yes. I recognized him after a little. I was at Port Royal when he arrived, and a sorry plight was ours there, indeed. It is a wretched country at best. Woe to the mariner who is shipwrecked before reaching his destination ; for they tell of strange and uncanny places far away there to the westward. In Labrador, north of the Great Bay, are mountains infested by griffins ; and south of that again is the Isle of Demons. I have been told by old comrades that, when they passed this mysterious and terrible island, they could hear the clamor of these demons, engaged in their infernal orgies. Sorry lands, indeed, for the habitation of Christian men ! Yet have those noble gentlemen, the Sieurs Champlain and De Monts, the Baron de Poutrincourt and my gallant commander, Biencourt, braved all dangers, and endured all hardships, in order to plant the standard of France in the New World, and found the realm of Acadie. Ah ! master landlord, they were true men indeed."

"But what had these brethren of the long robe to do with such enterprises?"

"Will you tell me if there be anything in the world with which they have *not* to do, from governing this fair land of France, down to spying on you and me here, as we sit smoking our pipes ? Are they likely to keep their hands off such an important matter as the establishment of a domain beyond the seas ? Two of them made plenty of trouble for the Baron de Poutrincourt, at Port Royal, but he soon taught them to keep their place. I will

say one thing for them, however, which is, that they have a curious insight into the future. In midwinter, when we were almost starved, and at our wits' end, Father Biard persuaded the commander to serve out the little wine we had left. Then he foretold the appearance of a relief vessel within a month; and, by my faith, it came in a week! Then, although our physical wants were relieved, we fell into worse dissensions and quarrelling than ever. Finally, a truce was patched up, and Biencourt allowed this man who has just left the room to return to France in the ship by which I came."

"What is his name?"

"Gilbert Du Thet; and a deep fellow he is. Do you know why he is here to-night?"

"No. I have seen him here before, and supposed he had been summoned to the Chateau."

"Right you are. Of course you know that the Chatelaine of La Roche Guyon, the famed Madame de Guercheville, was once a great beauty. Ah! I have heard pretty stories told by some of our noble passengers of her doings at court in days gone by. They say she was as good as she was handsome; and now, when youth and beauty are gone, she has set her heart on helping these fathers of the Society of Jesus to convert the inhabitants of New France. She has immense influence with the Queen Regent, and the great ladies of the court; and it is their money as well as hers which the priests have had at their command, and which has enabled them to

buy large interests in ships and cargoes bound for Acadie, and thus acquire a hold which cannot be shaken off."

"But why think you that the noble Chatelaine has need of him who has just gone to meet her?"

"I have heard that he was her agent on board the vessel sent out by the Baron de Poutrincourt, and I doubt not that she has need of his services in connection with new plans for the conversion of the heathen and the strengthening of the Jesuit power. I hear there was a noble gentleman and commander at Honfleur, not long ago, looking for a vessel suitable for the voyage to Port Royal; and only just now this priest asked me if I did not wish to ship again."

This conversation progressed for some time in rather a fitful way, and with an accompaniment of puffs from two pipes. At last, steps were again heard approaching, and the Jesuit entered the room. This time he said nothing at the outset, but walked slowly to the fire, took a seat by it, and sat looking intently into the glowing embers.

"Will you not have a bit of supper after your long day's work?" asked the landlord at last.

"No, I thank you;" said the Jesuit, turning his face so that the two other men saw a new light in his eyes, "I care not for meat or drink to-night; to-night, my masters, when I have learned great, and good, and joyous intelligence. Know you that upon my humble and unworthy shoulders has fallen the mantle of saints and martyrs; that I, the humblest

deserved failure of his occurred, our pious and zealous lady obtained from him the transfer of the whole of his claims. To this the crown made a munificent addition; and now behold our gracious Chatelaine of La Roche Guyon, the virtual sovereign of a vast realm beyond seas; the owner of lands more than ample for the founding of many kingdoms. Think, too, my masters, of the glory which is to crown this mighty heritage; for it is all consecrated to the Church. Think of the great and holy work before us, of bringing the savage inhabitants of this domain into the fold; of the joys that await those upon whose shoulders this sacred duty must fall; think—but I forget myself and I speak, I fear, to unwilling ears.” His face had become flushed with excitement, and his eyes were moist.

“And fear you not the dangers of the seas, and the terrors of the Isle of Demons?” asked the seaman. The ecclesiastic smiled placidly.

“I count not my life dear,” said he, “and, moreover, in the path of my holy duty I shall be as safe as within these four walls. As for the demons of which you speak, they would flee at the sight of the holy cross uplifted before them.”

“And do you soon depart?” asked the landlord.

“Yes, indeed; ere long the ship should be ready, and the brave La Saussaye has labored with skill and forethought. Our protectress has secured ample contributions from the great and pious ladies of the court, in addition to her own munificent-gifts; and we shall have all we can possibly need. We shall

be nearly fifty on board, all told, including a good Jesuit father and my humble self. Once more, master pilot, will you not come with us? We could trust much to your trained eye and stout arm, and the command under La Saussaye would prove a pleasant duty to you."

"No," replied the pilot, "I have said my say, once for all; but I believe you are a good man and deserve to succeed in all you may undertake. Therefore I beg you to take my hand and I wish you well with all my heart, as does my comrade here, I will be bound."

The Jesuit rose, as did his companions. He took their hands in his and pressed them warmly.

"I thank you, my masters," said he, gently and almost solemnly, "I thank you kindly, and now I shall bid you farewell. In this world we shall never meet again. May we come to dwell together in a realm beyond the skies. Once more I say peace be upon this house and all who dwell therein, and now, adieu!" He stepped quickly to the door and was gone. The seaman knocked the ashes from his pipe, sat a few moments looking at the fire, and then said:

"Huguenot I was born, Huguenot I shall live, and Huguenot, please God, I shall die—perhaps speedily and for my faith, if things go on as they are going—but, living or dying, I shall say that our friend who has just gone has his heart in the right place; let us drink his health."

CHAPTER II.

The Ring of the Crusader.

BUT a short time after the meeting recorded in the last chapter, a small vessel lay at her moorings in the harbor of Honfleur. About her was the bustle of preparation for departure. Her lading had occupied a considerable time, having been very careful and deliberate. With ample means and experienced advisers at his disposal, Commandant La Saussaye had omitted nothing that he thought wanting in a new colony; and spared no pains to fit his ship in the most complete manner for the long and perilous voyage across the stormy Atlantic and to the far-spreading realm of Acadie. Rarely was a vessel equipped under such circumstances. As owners of the staunch craft were registered none of the firms or individuals who were pushing the commerce of France into foreign seas and to foreign shores; but, in their stead, a branch of the great Society of Jesus. The members of this mighty order had made to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, and sought aid from all quarters in rendering their initial mission to the Pentagoët region complete in its appointments, and in providing for all contingencies. With the indomitable resolution, the intense force, the never-failing courage, and the

keen judgment which had already made them a power in Far Cathay and in the wilds of Africa, they prepared for this new advance into a stronghold of the heathen. Such an opening had never before presented itself. Hitherto they had won their triumphs, or found the martyr's crown so dearly coveted, on shores which owned alien masters. Now, however, they were to go to a realm practically their own; for Ignatius Loyola himself was no more devoted a Jesuit than the pious lady to whom the vast American domain had been given; she whose beauty had been the toast, and whose virtue and goodness the marvel of the dissolute Court of King Henry of Navarre. Well might they, then, with pious care and loving zeal, narrowly inspect the chosen vessel from keel to masthead; choose officers and sailors; and again and again add to the equipment such articles as devoted friends might offer of their bounty or careful second thought suggest. Nor was there forgotten an armament with which to defend both the vessel on the high seas, and the infant colony when founded. In palace and boudoir, as well as in cloister and cell, was there talk of the hope-freighted and prayer-spiced mission to Acadie; and, with pomp of stately ritual and reverent ceremonial, were ship and cargo dedicated to the holy cause.

At last all was ready on board; and, to set sail, the commandant awaited but the return of Du Thet from Paris, whither he had been summoned for a final interview with Madame de Guercheville, then

visiting the capital. Far different were the surroundings of this meeting with his patroness from those of the former one at La Roche Guyon. Now, as the Jesuit, clad as before in close-fitting black robe, walked with measured step and down-cast eyes through the crowded streets of the great city, the air was balmy, and the soft breath of Spring fanned his pallid cheek. On the trees in the palace garden the leaves and buds were springing fast, and all Nature, with joyous mien, was heralding the approach of Summer. Arriving at his destination, and ushered by a servant into a large room, the ecclesiastic saw a tall and stately matron rise from her seat and advance with outstretched hand to meet him. Over this hand, almost as fair as ever, he bent low; then, after words of salutation and benediction, took his seat, and answered many eager questions as to the state of affairs at Honfleur and the prospects of the mission. The conference lasted long, and, as the sun sank low and the air grew cool, a fire was made on the hearth, and its light played on the pictured and tapestried walls and the luxurious furniture. Then again, noticing the pallor of the ecclesiastic's cheek, the lady ordered wine and biscuits to be brought, and urged him to partake of them. As he sat, facing her in the dancing firelight, and warmed by the generous wine, there came to him a curious and vivid sense of the contrast between this scene and those he was destined ere long to see. Far away, thought he, on the rock-bound and grif-
fined coasts of Labrador, in the dense fogs

overhanging the estuary of the Pentagoët, or in the vast forest wilds where sounded the war whoop of the Indian, would there come before his weary eyes a vivid picture of this interview and its surroundings, so rare indeed in his life of ascetic and laborious self-denial. He seemed to see the future opening before him; weeks, months, years of hardship and suffering; and, sooner or later, an exile's death and a lonely grave under foreign skies. From this absorbing mental panorama—occupying him in fancy for an indefinite period, but, in reality, just the time consumed by Madame de Guercheville in drinking her glass of wine—he was recalled by the sound of her voice.

“And think you, brother,” asked she, “that you will early reach that wonderful city, Norumbega?”

“Madame, I know not. Most gladly would I welcome the certainty of our discovery thereof, but in your presence I speak but of those things which mine own eyes have seen. In Port Royal, men spoke of it, of its roofs and minarets shining in the sun, of its vast extent, of its natives skilled in science and the arts. Fain would I have gone thither, and, of my own knowledge, brought you tidings of it and its wonders; but that was not to be. Now, however, by the help of God, I will find it in all its beauty and glory, and thus confute the sceptics and scoffers who would deny its existence.”

“But can we doubt, after all the trustworthy narratives that have come to us? Are not these doubts and sceptical declarations but the creation

of those who would decry the power of our holy society and discourage our pious helpers? For myself, I am well convinced that the great city will indeed be found on Pentagoët's banks, and that the stories we have heard have come far short of what you will find to be the reality of its beauty and stateliness. Were I to hear of your discovery of it and of the planting by your hands of the holy cross within its walls, I could, methinks, say the *Nunc Dimittis* and close my eyes in peace."

"Madame, if it depend upon me to verify your predictions and realize your pious hopes, be sure that you shall not be disappointed. Whether it be far or near, it shall not elude me. Though the path thither lie in hostile regions, where wild beast and wilder man may infest or bar it; though it lead over countless leagues of mountain ranges and through countless leagues of forest and morass, yet, the Lord helping me, my steps shall not falter as I pursue my search. And if, by disease or violence, I fall by the way, surely shall others take up my pilgrim's staff and carry it to the goal."

"Brother," said the lady, "you have spoken well. On your lonely way, rest always assured, the prayers of the faithful shall follow you, and angel legions shall guard you. You have cheered me with your hopeful faith and told me all I would know. Our time is short, and there remains one thing undone." She unlocked a small casket on the table near her, and took from it a curious ring. It was of gold, and of antique shape, and set in it was a beautiful red stone.

"Brother," said Madame de Guercheville, "try to put this ring on the smallest of your fingers. It has thus been worn by men of gentle blood, whose hands were thin from the strain of war's hardships, as are yours from long self-denial." With some surprise, the Jesuit complied with her request, and the ring slid snugly on the last finger, thin and white, of his left hand. The stone shone a deep red in the firelight, which brought out the lines of a strange device carved thereon. "That ring," continued the lady, "has a striking history, and is one of the choicest possessions of my family. Many years ago, an ancestor of mine wrote an account of it, for which I have to-day sought in vain. Suffice it now to say, that the stone was brought from Jerusalem, by the famed member of our family who distinguished himself so greatly in the First Crusade. The story which he brought with it has been handed down, and is epitomized in the account I have mentioned, which also details the properties assigned to it by tradition. This stone is the *sardius* mentioned in Holy Writ, and is said to have come from the Temple of Solomon. You will see that, carefully as it has been preserved, the gold is much worn, while the stone retains all its pristine beauty. What the device upon it is, no one has been able to tell with certainty; but embodied therein are two Hebrew characters, signifying 'Hope' and 'Faith.' What think you of it? Is it not a rare and curious heir-loom?"

The Jesuit sat looking at the ring, shining in the

fitful firelight, on his slender finger. "Yes, it is very curious and very beautiful," said he, "and I thank you for showing it to me. So it came from the Orient—from the Holy Sepulchre—and was brought thence by one of the brave and stalwart knights who would have wrested those sacred places from the Paynim's power. Ah, madame, it was indeed good in you to let me see it, for it suggests rare possibilities to me. Your ancestor was a great and gallant soldier, and went on his noble mission toward the rising sun. I am but the humblest member of our great society, and I go, with crucifix and breviary, toward the lands where the great orb seems to set. He went to ancient countries, where dwelt the chosen people of God, and I to new and unknown regions, whereof neither history nor tradition has aught to say. But, madame, the thought has come to me, that mayhap there dwell in those sunset lands, hidden for ages, none other than the lost tribes of Israel. Often in the lonely night watches have I pondered upon this wonderful possibility, and my soul has rejoiced greatly at the thought that haply it might be my lot to discover the wandering people of the Lord in their long-concealed retirement, and carry to them the glad tidings of peace and goodwill. Perhaps, indeed, as I have sometimes thought, it may be they who dwell in the beautiful city of Norumbega, and they may have there built temples and holy places, which I shall see with my bodily eyes. Thus, madame, when you showed me this beautiful ring, the thought at once came to me that

I, too, might find some such relic in the lands of my self-imposed exile." He was drawing the ring from his finger, when the lady stopped him.

"No," she said, "let it remain where it is, brother. I give it to you—this cherished heirloom—to be yours, now and always. I give it to you because you are going, forgetful of self, to labor in a cause in which my whole heart is enlisted, and my interest in which will cease only with my life. Wear it as a worthy successor of those heroes, soldiers, cavaliers, on whose fingers it has rested in years and ages gone by. In far-off lands it shall be to you a token and a remembrance of my warm regard and heart-felt concern for your welfare, temporal and eternal." She had risen as she spoke, as had the Jesuit, and the latter, deeply moved, made an effort to express his feelings.

"Nay," said she, "thank me not. Between you and me there shall be no shade of obligation. Be seated, and let me tell you something more of this ring. There are those who contend that it has supernatural attributes. And why, I pray you, should it not, coming, as it does, from the Holy Sepulchre? To him who rightfully wears it, the tradition says, and who is not wanting in the hope and faith to which it is dedicated, it shall bring the fulfilment of his wishes and aims. On the other hand, should it, by accident or crime, come into the possession of one who has no right thereto, it will not long remain there. It will, in such case, be lost, and not again found except by one worthy to wear it on his

finger. After the Crusades, and the death of the last of our race who fought for the possession of the holy places, it was taken by a member of a collateral branch of the family, who had fallen on evil ways. He had it but a few days when it disappeared, and all search for it by him and his myrmidons was in vain. Some years later, it was found by a noble and gallant young soldier, bearing my family name, who had read of its loss and set himself to search for it. Led by some curious instinct, I know not what, he sought the neighborhood of a clear and beautiful spring, which bubbled from the ground in the park of a stately castle in Normandy. From this spring there flowed a purling stream over its bed of pebbles. The young soldier, convinced, in some mysterious way, that he was right, sought in the bed of this little stream for the ring—and in time he found it. Doubtless it had been dropped into the spring and temporarily hidden; and then, as years passed on, it had worked its way down the water course, under whose smooth pebbles it at last safely lay. Within a short time its finder had placed it on the finger of the fairest bride—the sweetest woman—that our race has known; she whose portrait is still shown to admiring visitors in the gallery of the old Norman castle. There, indeed, had it fitting place. Think, brother, what has been the history of this stone, and what strange stories it could tell; to say nothing of its mysterious origin and its traditional associations with the gorgeous temple of the Wise King. It has seen

wondrous happenings. It was in existence in the days of the Crucifixion, and the struggles of the early Church ; of the fall of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of God's own peculiar people. It had part in the Crusades, and the wars which have rent Europe asunder. It has lain hidden for many decades ; it has flashed in the eyes of the Paynim warriors who followed the great Saladin, and of the legions who have threatened France in later years. The ring has been worn by fair lady and brave man ; by soldier, courtier and priest ; and, in my eyes, never found it worthier resting place than at this moment." Again she rose, the Jesuit following her example.

"Brother," said she, "at last the time has come for us to part. Remember, as I have said, that you carry with you my good will and my hopes ; and, wherever you may be, my prayers will follow you. Farewell, and God be with you." She held out her hand, over which the ecclesiastic bent reverently for one instant. Then, with some faltering words, he departed ; and, as he passed under the lamp in the great entrance hall, the light shone on the deep-red stone on his finger.

Again, but a few days, and he stood on the deck of the vessel at Honfleur. Mass had been celebrated, and they were removing the extemporized altar. The sailors were weighing anchor, and all not going to the New World were leaving the vessel. The small boats by which she was surrounded were filled with friends of the adventurous voyag-

ers; many weeping, others bravely smiling and shouting words of farewell. Brother Du Thet stood near the stern, clad as before in his close black robe and cap, and looked at all around him with a steady and unmoved gaze. The sun was low, and its nearly horizontal rays fell on harbor and town, making the windows shine as if in flames.

At last Commandant La Saussaye gave the word, the sails were hoisted, the helmsman shaped the course for the harbor's mouth, and the voyage was begun. As the vessel gathered way, the bells were heard ringing the Angelus. Still the Jesuit stood, with folded arms, silently gazing at the receding shore. A Provençal sailor, near him, was lighting a lantern and softly singing :

"O Vierge ! O Marie !
Pour moi priez Dieu,
Adieu, adieu, patrie,
Provence, adieu."

As he raised the lantern to hang it in the rigging, its light shone on the red stone on the Jesuit's finger, and he saw the flash. He looked intently at the ring for a moment.

"So to the wearer of this does it, indeed, bring the fulfilment of his dearest hopes?" he asked himself, audibly. "So may it be, then, with me." He lifted both hands on high and raised his eyes to heaven.

"May this," said he, slowly and reverently, "be

my last farewell to my native land. May I return never again to France, but may I die laboring for the salvation of souls. May I, in the far-off heathen lands to which I am going, die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his."

CHAPTER III.

Saint Sauveur; Its Alpha and Omega.

ACROSS the broad Atlantic, wafted by favoring winds, the little bark had swiftly sped ; it had lain in the harbor of Port Royal some days and had again sailed for Kadesquit on the Pentagoët. All were well on board ; fortune had seemed to smile on them ; and the sea air had brought color to the usually pale cheeks of Du Thet. As the vessel approached Grand Menan, he and his colleagues, two of whom had joined him at Port Royal, sat on the deck in earnest conversation. In a few days they might hope to reach their destination, and then would their work begin in earnest. So deeply were they occupied that they did not see the dense fog which a change of wind was bringing upon them. Suddenly, to their great alarm, they found themselves completely enveloped in it and unable to see their way at all. Well knew they that around them and on every side lay dangers in the shape of sharp rocks and sunken reefs. They could hear the roar of breakers at a distance, and ever and anon the startling sound came nearer and nearer, as they drifted helplessly, now in one direction, now in another. The good fathers fell upon their knees and prayed fervently that the ship's company might

be spared, and the mission reach its destination. Hour after hour, as their supplications rose to Heaven, the mists seemed to grow more and more dense. For two days and nights their fears were incessant and distressing. Late on the second evening, however, Father Biard, who had risen from his knees and was straining his eyes in all directions, cried out :

“To God be the praise ! Behold, my brethren, we are saved. See the bright stars shining overhead, and lo ! the mists recede. Our prayers have been heard, and we shall live to see Kadesquit and labor for the glory of Him who hath delivered us !”

With the earliest rays of dawn the whole party were awake and eager to see into what position they had drifted. Striking, indeed, was the sight that met their eyes. On the left, or port, side of the vessel they saw but the green sea stretching to the horizon, with naught to interrupt the view ; on the right, or starboard, side was a rocky coast rising at intervals into bold headlands and elsewhere crowned with a growth of hardy green trees. From this shore, again, rose a mighty mountain ; or, as it seemed, two mountains connected by a depressed ridge or saddle. As if only just hurled from the recesses of the earth's interior by some vast volcanic disturbance, the “gray and thunder-smitten pile” raised its bare and desolate summit above the environing tree-clad hills and the smooth expanse of sea. To the right again, and in the rear, another mountain still was seen, rising like a gigantic battlement

almost from the water's edge. The pilot had climbed the rigging, from which came his cheery hail :

"Behold, reverend fathers; behold, my captain and my fellows, the great landmark of these strange regions. 'Tis the Island of Pemetic, so-called in the Indian tongue, but more rightly named by my old captain, the *Sieur Champlain*, when I was with him in these then unknown waters nine years ago. It was on just such a morning as this that he happily called it 'The Isle of the Desert Mountains.' Well do I now know my way, and soon shall we be at anchor in a placid harbor."

There was a confusion on board the vessel of mingled delight, laughter, and congratulations. Nearly all were talking rapidly, without waiting for replies; but one remained silent and stood aloof from the rest, gazing intently on the gray and rocky mass which dominated the view. It had a strange attraction for him. Stern and threatening to the others, it brought to him a certain sense of strength and protection; suggested, indeed, that beautiful Scriptural image, "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Long stood he, fascinated by the novel and imposing sight, and lost in reflection. Then, as the sun rose, brilliant and beautiful, above the glassy waters, it sent a flash of light to the stone shining on the hand with which he grasped the shroud, and called his attention back to present duty.

On sped the little vessel, past more headlands,

and by cliffs so curiously wrought of blocks of stone as almost to suggest the work of human hands. Now the great rocky mountain receded, and, as the bark bore away to the southward and westward, large islands appeared on the left-hand side. As the breeze freshened, the pilot's eyes grew brighter, and he hummed a gay French air. "Soon shall we now see the haven, my masters," cried he; and he ordered the helm put hard to port, and the sails trimmed. Now before the delighted eyes of the weary voyagers appeared open channels between green islands, and ever-changing vistas of new hills and mountains, near and far; now was seen a land-locked bay; and here at last was the anchor let go.

It was afternoon. The landing had been made, the holy cross raised, the mass celebrated and joyous hymns of praise sung. The courtly commander, his officers and his crew, had joined heartily with the fathers in this service of thanksgiving; and joy overspread all countenances, save that of Du Thet. To his extreme regret, the great gray mountain which had so strangely attracted him had disappeared, and he found no substitute, as did the rest, in the green shores washed by pellucid waters. It was as if a sense of guardianship and watchful care, suddenly vouchsafed to him after great peril, had been as suddenly withdrawn. Long did he, as before, stand apart wrapped in thought. The light-hearted gayety of the rest, natural enough, he could but acknowledge, grated upon him, and a premonition possessed his soul of a change to come, of

deeds to be done and of suffering to be endured, when he would need all possible help and support, even the fanciful strength to descend from the mighty presence of the gray and lofty mountain, only just lost to sight.

At this moment his attention was arrested by the noise of a discussion, between the captain on the one hand and the pilot and crew on the other. In the midst of it, a thin column of smoke was seen rising from a point not far away, and the pilot cried out that it was an Indian signal.

"They wish to know if we need their services in any way," said he. "I will go at once and meet them." This, the boat having been launched, he did, soon returning with messages of good will. The savages were delighted, he reported, to learn that the fathers from Port Royal were in the ship, and they particularly wished to meet Father Biard, whom they had known at the original mission station two years before. This good man at once went with the pilot to see them, and begged that they would show the commandant the way to Kadesquit. They received him gladly and besought him to relinquish the idea of going to that place; and to remain instead at a beautiful spot, not far from their own village and on the other side of the sound or inland sea, which would be found stretching northward for seven miles from a point a short distance from where they then stood. Seeing the priest hesitate and knowing well the road to his good will, they told him he must indeed come, for

their chief, named Asticou, was dangerously ill and might die without the baptism which they said he earnestly desired. Of course no other argument was needed with the father, and he went at once, only to find the Sagamore not mortally ill at all, but suffering from rheumatism. He then determined to see the favored spot described by the Indians; and in a birch-bark canoe he was conveyed across the beautiful sheet of water to a sloping greensward of from twenty-five to thirty acres in extent. From the slight beach it rose to the foot of a square-topped, stony hill, on which grew, clinging to the ledges, rock maple, birch, and stunted spruce trees. Behind it, again, towered a mountain, in the outline of which the Indians traced a resemblance to a dog. It was a veritable fertile oasis in the midst of a region either rocky and sterile, or densely wooded. The grass grew very high, and down to the edge of the beach. From this beach there bubbled two beautiful springs; one on the east side and one on the west, of pure, ice-cold water. Looking eastward across the sound, one saw a low cliff washed by the tide, near which were the wigwams of Asticou's village. To the south were seen green islands, sheltering the mouth of the sound and making a spacious and superb harbor, the water as smooth as a lake.

After a careful inspection, the good father hastened to rejoin his companions; and, upon his report, it was unanimously decided to establish the missionary colony at the place just seen by him. Beyond

all doubt, thought these good people, had they been providentially led to this spot, and their movements ordered by a higher power. Du Thet said nothing, but, when he had reached the chosen place, he looked carefully for the peak of the great stony mountain. Alas! it was not to be seen. Round a large part of the horizon rose mountain summits, some green, some inexpressibly sterile and desolate; but the sight of the monarch of all, which had so excited his interest and moved his inmost feelings, was denied him. Again there came over him the sense of impending happenings of grave import; and, but for the habit of stern mental discipline, born of the training of his order, he would have given way to foreboding and despondency. As it was, he kept his own counsel and gave no outward evidence of the conflict within him, and he joined in the new celebration of the mass and the other solemn ceremonies with which the establishment of the colony of Saint Sauveur was accompanied.

In due time the ship was moored directly opposite the little settlement, some slight fortifications were thrown up, and agricultural work was begun. In all the labor falling to his share, Brother Du Thet showed the utmost zeal and diligence, but his thoughts were far away.

"Why should I," he had reflected, "allow vain forebodings to depress my spirit? Come what may, I am assuredly immortal until my work is done." But he chafed at the routine of the little colony. He was of those who lead forlorn hopes, and he

pined for the hour, not far away, when he might, "with staff in hand and sandal-shoon," begin his lonely and perilous search for Norumbega, the mystical city and the goal of his hopes and aspirations.

One morning he rose early, crossed the sound and made his way on foot to the eastward. Suddenly there burst upon his sight the great stony summit on which his imagination incessantly dwelt. He paused and gazed thereon long and intently; then he turned and retraced his steps. Right thankful was he that with his bodily eyes he had once more seen it. Again had the sight, with singular vividness, brought to him a sense of strength and protection, and restored his mental equilibrium. As he walked rapidly back toward the sound, his thoughts became more and more exalted and spiritual, and he felt himself ready and eager for whatever the future might have in store. In the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land," he had rested, only to rise like a giant refreshed. An Indian ferried him across the sound in his canoe, and, as he approached the little settlement, he was struck with its calm and peaceful aspect; the bright sun shone on the white tents and the half-finished houses; upon the figures of men working at these buildings or tilling the fields; and upon the goats nibbling where the long grass had been cut. The sky was cloudless, and the air cool and bracing. The vessel lay at anchor, her sails disposed as awnings over her deck; the commandant sat on a rough bench, placidly smoking, and two of the fathers were talking with him. Now

was heard the clear, musical note of a bell, which they had brought ashore from the ship and were carrying to where a tiny chapel was in course of erection. Never, it seemed to the good brother, had his eyes rested on a more calm and peaceful scene. He disembarked and drank from the ice-cold spring before joining his comrades. As he did so, he noticed the channel of bright pebbles down which a little stream trickled from the spring to the sea; and at once there came to him a remembrance of Madame de Guercheville's story of the loss and finding of the ring, now shining on his finger here in this little lonely colony in the New World, as it had shone on that of the Crusader in past ages and in sunrise lands. "If lost here, will it ever be found again?" thought he, looking at the rich color of the stone, brought out by the vivid sunlight. "Oh! may I not lose it until, following tradition, it has brought me the fulfilment of my dearest wishes." He advanced toward the commandant and his companions, who were now silent and lost in meditation. He gravely saluted them, then stood with folded arms, looking down the sound. Just then a canoe rounded one of the green islands at its mouth, and came rapidly toward the beach. As it approached, Du Thet saw that its two occupants were paddling furiously, so that it almost leaped through the water. On and on it came; it touched the bank; the Indians sprang from it, ran toward the group and, evidently in great excitement and distress, prostrated themselves on the ground, speaking rapidly in their own language.

The commandant at once summoned the interpreter, who, after hearing a few words, began excitedly to translate the Indian's startling narration, as follows:

"Of course, the brave commandant and the good fathers know that the English have a settlement far to the southward. Every year they come to the Islands of Pencoit, twenty-five leagues distant from this place, to procure fish for their sustenance in winter. This year they have been overtaken by fog, and have come a long way out of their course, and close to Saint Sauveur. These two Indians saw their vessel and went to meet it, supposing it to contain Frenchmen on their way to find their countrymen in the little colony. Going on board, they made it known by signs that another vessel had come from France. The supposed Frenchmen succeeded in finding out how many men this vessel here had contained ; and, when they learned, showed signs of great satisfaction, and asked to be guided to its vicinity. The Indians, re-entering their canoe, proceeded to do this; and they had led the strangers for some distance and had given them the proper course, when they noticed that they were making preparations for battle. Astonished and distressed beyond measure, they have paddled their canoe ahead with all speed, fortunately escaping the shots fired at them, and have come to warn their friends of what they fear is an impending danger. Should it prove that they have unwittingly brought this danger to the colony, their grief will know no bounds."

Like a clap of thunder in a clear sky came this intelligence to the French. The commandant asked a few questions; then he looked at the vane, and saw that the wind, now blowing fresh, was from the south, and would be fair for a vessel entering the sound. He at once gave the word to prepare for battle, and sent the pilot in a boat to reconnoitre. Soon the English vessel was seen approaching, with flag flying and drums and trumpets sounding. The commandant sent part of his men on board his ship, remaining on shore with the rest. With this vessel's fighting crew, under Captain Flory, went Du Thet, still in the exalted mood which had come upon him in the morning. His dress was that of the priest and the recluse, but in his eye, as danger seemed to draw near, was the fire of the born warrior who feared no foe, and on his finger sparkled the ring once worn by men who had hurled themselves on the hosts of the Saracens.

Well might the English and their captain, Argall, partly fisherman, partly trader, and wholly free-boöter, have rejoiced when they heard of the limited numbers of the French; for their sixty men and fourteen pieces of artillery made a fight with them unequal indeed; and, as his ship sped on, the captain called upon the gunners to blow their matches and stand ready.

On board the French vessel all was uncertainty and confusion. The men hardly realized that they were to be attacked at all; certainly never dreamed that this could happen before a parley or a sum-

mons. As the hostile ship drew near, they hailed it. For reply came shouts of menace and a discharge of cannon and musketry. Flory, brave and skilful, but taken unawares, shouted his commands. There was a moment's hesitancy on the part of those to whom they were addressed, but none on that of the brave Du Thet. As might some warrior priest of old have ridden upon the Paynim hordes, so sprang he to the battery and applied the smoking match, snatched from a seaman's hand. Alas ! it was all in vain. The odds against the French were overwhelming. Again the roar of the English guns, and the gallant brother, the captain, and a number of men fell wounded ; the vessel was surrendered, and all was lost. The English landed and, without show of right or reason, seized persons and property of a nation with which they were at profound peace. Part of the survivors of their cowardly attack were carried prisoners to Virginia, and part were set adrift in an open boat, to be fortunately joined by the pilot (who had not returned from his reconnoissance), and ultimately carried to France in a trading vessel. The next year, Argall returned to destroy all traces of the French occupation — even the rude crosses that marked the humble graves ; and, when he sailed away, the little colony of Saint Sauveur was as if it had never been.

CHAPTER IV.

Euthanasia.

THE sun was sinking low ; and, while the waters of the sound and the mountains beyond it were bathed in glorious light, the spot which only a day before had been the site of the peaceful settlement of Saint Sauveur was already in shadow. Upon the rude couch, placed, at the request of its occupant, outside of the tent and in sight of the distant hills, lay the brave Du Thet. His cheeks were sunken, and his face as pale as death ; but faith and resignation shone in his eyes. The last sacrament had been administered to him, and he had joined in spirit therein, and in the holy hymns which had resounded over the still waters—the songs of Zion sung in a strange land. Around him knelt and stood his companions, some praying, many in tears. Near him was the surgeon of the English ship, a good and skilful man. At last the sufferer motioned to one of the fathers to approach him. “The will of the Lord be done,” said he, faintly, “but I would fain have seen the walls of Norumbega and planted the cross thereon. I pray you, take it up in my stead and bear it on, to the glory of God.” The surgeon drew the father aside.

“The good man is near his end,” whispered he.
“**He has but a few moments to live.**”

The mourning company watched in silence. The surgeon took the dying man's wrist in his fingers; it was the left wrist, and the motion brought the ring on the last finger in sight of the eyes from which the light was fast fading. Du Thet's lips moved, and he said, scarce audibly:

"Tell my protectress it indeed brought me the fulfilment of my wish—for—I die at my post—in the land of the heathen—and—God be praised,"—an ecstatic expression came to his face and he raised his head convulsively, "before my eyes is the great city I have longed to see—Norumbega at last! Nay, not Norumbega—*Urbs Sion mystica—condita celo!*" He fell back, and the surgeon dropped his wrist. Then rose one of the fathers and spoke in a firm voice:

"Christian friends," said he, "while our brother lived we lamented; but now that the Lord hath taken him, we have no more cause for weeping, but should rather praise Him who hath called our comrade away from a world of sin and sorrow. Think you not that in deed and truth he coveted the boon which hath been vouchsafed him—the martyr's crown? The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. My brethren, let us pray."

As the sailors landed by Argall on his second expedition were embarking, one of them stopped near the easternmost spring and began searching in its vicinity.

"Why do you that?" asked a companion. The

sailor shook his head with annoyance. "I was on the expedition last year," said he, "which made short work of those beggarly Frenchmen with their colony and their mummeries; and the captain sent some of us to help bury one of those Popish priests; he was killed in the fight—and served him right, too. I made a good thing out of him,—if I could only have kept it. There was a dainty ring on his finger, and, when no one was looking, I drew it off and put it in my pocket. It was just my luck to lose it that very afternoon not far from this place. I looked for it then for hours, but in vain, and now I am wasting more time in the fruitless search. Ah! there is the signal of recall, and we must be off."

They were gone, and for nearly a century and a half no white man's foot trod the spot where, amidst stormy scenes, the brave Jesuit had entered into his rest.

END OF THE PROLOGUE.

THE STORY;

A. D. 188-.

CHAPTER I.

Morning at Bar Harbor.

MR. PERCIVAL SEATON awoke at just the right moment. Long practice, in war and peace, had taught him how to leave the realm of sleep at the exact hour on which he had fixed his mind the night before. He regarded early rising, when unnecessary, as a delusion, and had a prompt and decisive answer ready for all arguments and quotations in favor thereof. This particular morning, he, as he expressed it, sacrificed himself on the altar of friendship. The day before he had received a telegram from his friend Herbert Somers, saying that he would arrive by the night train from Boston; and such were the relations of said Herbert Somers with all his friends, old and young, that an intimation of his approach always brought to them the suggestion of doing something for his comfort or pleasure. Most people know at least one of these fortunate beings, these cheery, sunshiny souls, whom to love and admire is the most natural thing in the world.

Mr. Seaton, arrayed from long habit in the pyjamas and sleeping jacket of the Far East, thrust his feet into slippers, woven of Canton straw, went to the window and drew the curtain.

"Still that confounded fog," he ejaculated, "thick enough to cut with a knife, and the third day of it, too." Then he left the window, and began his toilet. When it was finished he emerged from his cottage room and passed through an opening leading to the main street; where, as in sack coat and trowsers of gray tweed he walked with firm step along the plank walk, he might properly be presented to the reader. Most people called him handsome, and some pronounced him distinguished-looking. He was both, and he had the air of a thorough-bred, of a gentleman to the ends of his fingers. He was on the shady side of forty and the sunny side of fifty, a bachelor of large means, and a man of both heart and brains. He was tall and straight, and carried himself as should one who had the right to wear, as did he, the parti-colored button of the Loyal Legion in the left lapel of his coat. He was a man of the world in the best sense, and knew that world well. He was at home, after long travel and residence in the by-ways as well as the cities of Europe, and had traversed and studied much of the vast region "east of the Cape," and the lands lying under the Southern Cross. Throughout all his wanderings he had remained a staunch and earnest patriot; and it was only when at home, and among his friends, that he would at times descant upon what he thought distressing and dangerous aspects of the social and political life of his native land. He had in perfection, too, that true instinct of the traveller

and explorer which is rather sharpened than dulled by a wandering life, and thus creates a zest for all new journeys and places.

So was he the same interested observer of nature and people in Mount Desert, and on the way thither, as he had been in the high Himalayas, or on the great post-road between the Amoor region and European Russia; and he was at his best, physically and mentally, as he trod, in the early morning, the main street of the curious little summer town of Bar Harbor. Over this main street, as over sea, and harbor, and mountain, and valley, lay a dense fog, through which men were almost seen as trees walking, and buildings loomed doubtful and uncanny of outline. The street ran from the water through the heart of the town and on towards certain "heads" and "cliffs," much frequented, but, as Seaton said, "rather cockney sights, founded on the buck-board interests and supported by the credulity of tourists." On one side of it were shops, well-stocked and of attractive aspect, but conveying a certain impression of transitoriness, as if, on the slightest provocation, they would fold their awnings and silently steal away. On past them, and down the incline toward the water, the stalwart walker made his way. He was jostled, unintentionally, by men transferring to the shops the varied supplies to be consumed during the coming day by the vast army of boarders; and by him rolled, gathering as gather the hosts for the battle, the vast army of buck-boards, soon to be dispersed,

party-laden, to the four quarters of the island. Reaching the water, he looked seaward, as the fresh breeze blew in his face. The wharves and jetties were fringed with scores of row-boats and canoes, tossing gently on the slight ground swell. Between them and an island, rising dim in the mist and connected by a bar with the mainland, were scores of sail-boats, small steamers and yachts, and around and above them, dense as a curtain, lay the quiet, silent, persistent mist. Even as he looked, however, there seemed to strike into it, and to be gradually diffused through it, a yellow light. It increased until the mist seemed like airy gauze of filmy golden thread. Looking overhead, Seaton saw the bluest of crystal skies. Looking down again, all was clear at the level of his eyes. Beyond green islands, densely covered with ragged trees, enough like the quills of the porcupine to rightly suggest the name given these same islands, and the translucent waters of Frenchman's Bay, he saw the Sullivan Hills, under a gradually narrowing belt of the purest white, which stretched around to the distant Schoodic Mountain at the eastward. It was, too, as if the same fairy fingers which, with invisible cords, were drawing in this belt, were also lifting a beautiful cloud-curtain which had draped a great mountain at the southward; and then, with swift and graceful movement, gathering the whole gauzy fabric together and tossing it aloft, to be dissipated in the realm of ether. Seaton was one of those true and faithful lovers of Nature whose de-

votion she rewards out of the largess of her choicest treasures. With appreciative and grateful eye did he look upon the wonderful combination of sea and mountain which has made the spot famous; but in vain did he search his well-stocked gallery of memories for its counterpart. Fleeting traces of picturesque towns on the shores of the Mediterranean, souvenirs of the Norway coasts and of the Inland Sea of Japan, baffled him in turn; and at last he relinquished the effort, and gave himself up to the enjoyment of this first course of the banquet of beauty to which he had been bidden.

A rich banquet was it, indeed! To use the expressive jargon of the Stock Exchange, there is a "corner," in this country, in rocky coast. Few can realize that there is not a foot of it between Narragansett Bay and Key West; and it is surprising, in these days of "boycotting," that New England has not been subjected to that process for having an odious monopoly thereof. Nor can there, in these northern regions themselves, be found any spot to compare with Mount Desert, any spot in which are condensed so many rare and strikingly diversified pictures of grandeur and grace. It is to old travelers, as it was to Seaton, an epitome of suggestions and reminiscences of many far-distant and widely-scattered beauties in foreign lands and seas. Within the limits of the surf-beaten isle might Ruskin have sought new and grand developments of mountain gloom and mountain glory; Byron have found inspiration in an ocean enveloping new Isles of

Greece; and Wordsworth have sung of lake and land-locked sound. Then Nature, a mistress of moods and caprices, and requiring devotion in them all, may at any time treat her subjects as did she that loyal one, Mr. Percival Seaton. Around and above this rare palace of hers she may draw, in anticipation of the visitor's arrival, a dense mantle and keep it there long enough to test his patience and his faith most severely; only at last to lift it with a royal grace and leave the glorious island, in all its majesty and beauty, shining in the sun.

Seaton, standing on the wharf and feasting his eyes on the panorama before them, inflated his chest with long respirations of the delicious air, laden with ozone and some subtly distilled essence of the sea. Everything about him was springing, under the genial sunshine, into new life. The men who had boats and canoes to let and had been sitting, listless and despondent, in the fog, were now bestirring themselves in preparing for their customers, and whistling merrily at their tasks. On the handsome yachts in the harbor, men were loosening the sails to dry in the sun, and owners and guests, in conventional nautical costume, were appearing on deck. From the Gouldsborough steamer they were unloading indefinite numbers of milk-cans and large quantities of garden produce, all destined for the consumption of the omnivorous boarder. Even at this early hour, some ardent devotees of canoeing had made their appearance, and were, with

more or less of arduous labor, traversing the surface of the harbor.

"And thus," said Seaton to himself, "do Nature and Art and Science lay themselves under contribution, thus do Capital and Labor exert themselves in peaceful co-operation, for the comfort and pleasure of that most noble and exacting potentate, the summer visitor; and rightly, too, in this of all places. For lo! was not indigenous man in this lovely island in the worst of bad ways not so very long ago? Were not the forests all cut, and the bounty withdrawn from the fishermen, and the few farms producing badly; were not poverty and destitution impending, when the *Deus ex Machina* appeared, when the first waves of the coming sea of boarders broke upon the rocky coast? And now do not Peace and Plenty smilingly reign, and Content sit jocund on the housetop? Truly should the grateful native rear, on the highest peak of Green Mountain, a monument to his benefactor; and, by the way, here comes a fresh instalment of him, in which I have a personal interest. Bless the fellow! I cannot imagine how I have come to care so much for him. *O! si sic omnes*," and he walked nearer the edge of the wharf.

Swiftly crossing the open space between Bar Island and one of the Porcupines was the white ferry steamer; and she speedily rounded the latter and, after sounding a sepulchral whistle, ran in for the wharf. On the upper deck and at the rail stood a young man, who waved his hat to Seaton. When the

plank was passed, he was the first to set his foot on it, and in a moment he was shaking his friend's hand.

Herbert Somers was something less than thirty years old ; a tall man of lithe, athletic figure. His eyes were deep gray ; his complexion fair ; his hair (short and brushed back at the temples) and moustaches brown, with the slightest auburn tinge. His expression was extremely frank and winning, and altogether he was one of those on whom Fortune seems to smile, first, last, and all the time. Everything about him, too, was neat without being finical ; such as his travelling-suit, portmanteau, and umbrella ; and he had the air of one at ease with the world.

He had the right, too, to appear as contented and in as good spirits as he did, for his holiday came only after hard work, and his prospects were of the best. During his college course, he chose his vocation in life and set his heart upon success therein. Looking over the long catalogue of professions and occupations into which college graduates enter, he found that success in those most in vogue was attained, as a general rule, only after years of absorbing labor and keen competition. Looking, also, at the enormous importance of railroads in this country and their prominent position as factors in its growth and prosperity, he conceived an earnest purpose of connecting himself with them, and thus finding a life-work which would afford scope for his ambition and tastes. He began, therefore, a systematic course of preparation for both

a theoretical and practical grasp of the business. Before the conclusion of his college course he had studied the subject not a little ; and his bachelor's degree had hardly been granted when he sailed for Europe, in which country, as in his own, he learned engineering. Then, securing a position in the corps sent out to survey and construct a new line, he underwent a thorough experience in the field. Upon the solid foundation thus laid, he built up a practical acquaintance with all the various departments,—the management of motive power, the transportation of freight and passengers, and the system of accounts. Thus equipped, he found ready employment as an assistant manager ; and the thorough, all-round knowledge of the business which he had acquired, together with his brains and energy, advanced him rapidly. At last came the time for his first real vacation, together with hopes of promotion to a post much more important than any he had held ; and here he was.

The two men walked up the street, which was filled with tourist-laden buck-boards, and crossed it in front of an immense wooden hotel, with verandas wide enough for the climate of the tropics, and stern, gray, mediæval towers ; not, however, of stone, but only of unostentatious pine. From these verandas many bright, many curious eyes surveyed them, and they mounted the long steps in the face of a battery of glances. In a corner of the large hall was what passed for an office, but shorn of all the pomp and state befitting the American

hotel of the period. Upon the counter, the youthful boarder, cigarette in mouth, sat comfortably perched; behind it nonchalantly strolled he to search for letters or parcels; and of the conventional hotel clerk, pilloried by so many able pens, there was no trace.

"But I thought you had a room for me in a cottage," said Somers.

"True," said Seaton, "but you are a 'mealer' here."

"And what on earth is a 'mealer'?"

"Speak low, or you will betray your ignorance. Is it possible that you, a graduate of Harvard and reader of newspapers, really do not know?"

"I never heard of such a thing."

"Not even of a 'haul-mealer'?"

"Heaven save the mark!"

"Know, then, that a 'mealer' is he who walks from his rooms to the hotel for his meals; while a 'haul-mealer' is a being, said to exist in remote recesses of Bar Harbor, who is hauled to his or her refectory on a buck-board. And now, compose your features and look your best, for we are about to enter the dining-room, and first impressions go for much. I don't mean to suggest that you are good-looking or interesting enough to attract attention under ordinary circumstances, but here there are not enough young men to go around, and every one counts."

"How about yourself?" asked Somers. "Are you what Oscar Wilde called 'the leader of the

gilded youth,' or is my lord's mood a cynical one for the nonce?"

"A truce to personalities," said Seaton. "In this august assembly, think, as Charles Sumner said, of the race, not of individuals."

They had entered an enormous dining-room, filled with tables, at one of which they seated themselves. A neatly-attired girl approached and addressed Somers, in terms of the formula for that meal.

"There's steak," said she, "and fried mush and broiled halibut, and liver and bacon and vegetable hash."

"Gentle maiden," said Somers, "I prithee 'say it again and say it slow.'—Thank you.—And what might 'vegetable hash' be?"

"Leavin's of the dinner," promptly replied the girl.

"Then I will none of it," said the young man. "Rather bring me of the beefsteak and bring it rare."

"My dear Herbert," said Seaton, as the girl departed, "this is no place for airy persiflage. You must know that these young ladies are of the *fine fleur* of Hancock County, and many of them, when not on duty here, are engaged in instructing childhood and infancy. Therefore you must not address them as you do the so-called 'hash-slingers' of that Boundless West of which you talk so much."

"Far be it from me to offend in such regard," said Somers. "Henceforward my demeanor shall

be a model for these youths in 'blazers' and knickerbockers."

"They need some lessons badly enough," said Seaton. "I suppose that, if a man be wholly given up to lawn tennis, he may dress in a garb suited thereto; but why they should come into the dining-room and the presence of ladies in the same attire, I fail to see. It is only a little less bad form for men to appear in these costumes who don't play tennis at all."

"Seaton," asked the young man after a pause, "may I ask you a serious question?"

"Certainly."


"Very well. Now, you are a man who knows what good living is and are thoroughly accustomed to it. You always dine late, and I have heard you argue that dyspepsia and its entailed misery await the man who takes his dinner in the middle of the day, and eats hot biscuit and preserves at night. How is it that you can, with your eyes open, incur the liabilities of vegetable hash at a nine o'clock breakfast, and dine between one and three, as our poor friend H—— phrased it, 'in the great North American style, with six kind of vegetables on one plate, and quantities of ice-water.'"

"My dear fellow, that is a perfectly fair question and deserves an answer, which you shall have in two words, what the French call *force majeure*. In living as I do here, I violate all the traditions of my life and write myself down a humbug three times a day; but I can't help it. You are perfectly aware that

no people calling themselves civilized ever lived as badly as do we Americans. Dyspepsia is our national disease, and it is a marvel to me that we have attained greatness, when so many of us eat saleratus bread. South of Washington, until you reach New Orleans, and west of it, until you reach San Francisco, a really civilized dinner is not to be had outside of a private house or a club. When I go away from my own surroundings, especially when I go to a summer resort, I carry, if not my life, my digestion in my hand, and yet I go. Look around the room and you will see people, who live well by inheritance, actually eating doughnuts. It is *force majeure*, I tell you—that power which makes you do things against your will.”

“Well said, my philosopher,” was the reply; “I suppose that one coming here might act as our charming friend S—— asked me to do last January. In his note inviting me to meet a congenial party in the house he had hired for the winter, he said: ‘And, by the way, the breakfast will be very bad, so please forget your stomach for a while.’ But, tell me, can one distinguish a ‘mealier’ from a boarder here, or a ‘haul-mealer’ from a ‘mealier’?”

“If I saw a particularly lugubrious countenance, I should put its possessor down as a ‘haul-mealer,’ ever since I met one going to buy her tickets, and leave the place. She said she must draw the line somewhere, and when the hauling cost more than the mealings it was time to sing the *chant du depart*.”



"I should say so," said Somers.

After breakfast the two friends sat smoking on the wide veranda, which was well filled with people of both sexes and almost all ages. Pre-eminent were the beautiful young girls, scores of them—tall and short, fair-haired and dark-haired, blue-eyed, and hazel-eyed, and brown-eyed—all rejoicing in their youth and beauty, all feeling how thoroughly life was worth living in the days of bright summer, and lawn tennis, and canoes, and buck-boards, and ice-cream soda.

"Pretty, are they not?" said Seaton. "At my age I may claim to be a fair judge, and I assert that in the same number of people there never was gathered a larger proportion of lovely girls and handsome women than at the last 'hop' given here. The fumes of naphtha gas were not exhilarating nor was the orchestra that of Strauss, but the room certainly held what some one has called 'rosy ranks of loveliness.' I wish I could say as much for our sex, as represented here. Of course, there are some fine specimens; but the callow youth seem to me particularly callow this year, and yet they are in clover. Unless they are wholly spoiled, as they seem in a fair way to be, one would think that they must pass much time in contrasting themselves with their partners. Positively, my dear Herbert, if I were your age, I should not know which way to turn. Come, I can give or get you all the introductions you want. Why not take up your social duties at once?"

"All in good time. I want first to speak to you about something else."

"Proceed."

"Seaton, you have been my guide, philosopher, and friend for years. Would you set me down as a crank?"

"Certainly not. Why do you ask such a question?"

"Listen, old man. You know that I only arrived from Europe last week, and my visit there was a flying one. You probably do *not* know that my class-mate, Edgar Ramsay, was with me nearly all the time. Do you remember meeting him at my rooms winter before last?"

"A thin, delicate-looking man, was he not; with black eyes and hair?"

"Yes. We were great friends in college. His mother's family were French, and he has passed much of his time abroad since graduation. I am sorry to say that his health is very delicate, and I sometimes fear he is not long for this world. He came near crossing with me, thinking a summer in the United States might benefit him. He was more or less of a sentimentalist and dreamer in college; and, without boring one in the least with his fancies, he is now more of both than ever. He has given much time to historical research, particularly in relation to all this part of our country, which was once, he says, wholly French and called Acadie."

"Quite right. I know that."

"I do not want to spin you too long a yarn, but

as I have begun to tell you why I fear I may turn out a crank, I may as well go on."

"By all means."

"It seems that Ramsay had never been here, on Mount Desert, but he has read much about it and become greatly interested in it. I cannot tell how much time he spent in libraries, and in conference with those old 'bibliophiles' on the embankment of the Seine, in Paris; but he has certainly picked up much information, and some curious stories and legends, bearing upon this very spot or its near neighborhood. More than this, he has succeeded in quite infecting me with something of his feverish interest in the subject, and his curious faith in regard to it. Hence my fear that, when you hear about his fancies, you will think me something very like a crank, if not actually one. You must know, however, that poor Ramsay, who was always fond of your humble servant, has developed the most remarkable and, for him, the most demonstrative affection for me. I reciprocate this cordially, for not only is he a most lovable fellow, but my sympathies are very strongly interested in his behalf. Thus I am likely to be enlisted, even if it were against my cool judgment, in his hobbies and strange fancies."

"That seems to me perfectly natural," said Seaton, "and you may rest assured that I shall never think you a crank. You are not of the stuff of which cranks are made. You had better tell me what special turn your friend's fancies have taken.

They may prove interesting. Do not begin at the moment, however. We must not waste this rare morning on the hotel veranda. Let us take a drive, and then we can talk to our hearts' content and enjoy the beauties of nature at the same time. I suppose you want to go to your room first?"

"Yes, for a moment. It is close by, is it not?"

"You will require a guide for the first time, and you shall have a distinguished one. This hotel may not have a brown-stone front and tapestry carpets, but it has a very neat thing in hall-boys—certain Japanese gentlemen, serving temporarily, for linguistic or other purposes, in that useful capacity. Fancy a reduced nobleman answering to the name of 'Front'; a Daimio, relieved from the Daimio business, carrying ice-water; a feudal prince in exile piloting you to your quarters. Here, Henry, please show this gentleman to my rooms."

CHAPTER II.

Told on the Road.

WHEN Somers returned, he found Seaton on the veranda, holding newly-received letters in his hand, and looking with a critical eye at the vehicles ranged in front of the hotel and momentarily starting with parties.

"A friend of mine," said the latter, "on first beholding this variegated prospect, broke into rhyme. Said he :

' 'Tis the margin of old ocean,
'Tis (poetic license) the land of snow and sleet.
Lo ! the buck-board's swaying motion
With cut-under doth compete.'

How is that ?"

"Excellent ; but you must explain. The buck-board I know, but the term 'cut-under' really comes in such a questionable shape that I must challenge it."

"Easily done. With all the merits of the buck-board, it has one drawback. To turn it round requires the deft hand of a professional, for the wheels strike the body at an angle. In the other vehicle, they slide smoothly and gracefully under it, after the manner of many four-wheeled carriages in other climes."

"Is it heresy to the prevailing cult of buck-boards to call that a great advantage?"

"Decidedly; but, all the same, I have chartered a cut-under. Jump in."

They started, and the vehicle, drawn by an excellent horse, rolled rapidly through the streets of the mushroom town. Above these streets towered steep hills, and, behind these, high mountains; on them were large barns of hotels, and cottages of different degrees of newness and capacity. Then green lawns appeared at the right, with the water showing beyond.

"Frenchman's Bay," said Seaton, pointing it out, "for want of a better name. The Bay of Fundy was the real *Baye Française*, and this was undoubtedly St. Sauveur Bay. Whatever you may call it, is it not beautiful?"

Somers looked over the foreground to the shining sea. The breeze was only strong enough to accent the ripples on its surface, and in the translucent atmosphere the islands, the distant shore, and the hills on the horizon were vividly outlined.

"Beautiful, indeed," said he.

"The only fault about it," said Seaton, "is that it is in this country. If it were but 'on the other side,' how eagerly would we cross the ocean to see it."

"True," said Somers, "and more's the pity."

"How do you explain," asked Seaton, "the curious limitations of the prevailing Anglomania? Why not follow the example of our so-called kin

beyond sea in lauding to the skies the beauties and glories of one's own land and decrying the natural features of all others? Do you remember Fred Hudson's story of the Englishman consigned to him some years ago? Fred started as a hopeful and enthusiastic cicerone, but he soon wearied of one long note of disparagement from his charge. He concluded to play his best trump, and took the condescending foreigner to West Point in October. From that rear veranda of the hotel (you remember it) he pointed out the exquisite vista of Newburgh Bay, shut in by leafy walls of bronze and gold. The Briton put his glass in his eye and surveyed the scene. Then he dropped the glass with a twitch, and paralyzed Fred with the remark, 'It's very odd.' And yet that fellow was consistently patriotic. He could see no beauties in the Hudson Highlands, but he calls a respectable country brook the 'wide rolling Severn,' and the peaks of Derbyshire overtop, in his eyes, the crests of the Sierra Madre. And, worst of all, he makes us say amen. But look here, my dear fellow, you spoke of some one else's hobbies just now. How about this of mine which I have mounted?"

"I thoroughly agree with you," said Somers, "but this view had taken possession of me. Did some one say this road was called the Cornice?"

"Yes. Nothing would content them, of course, but a foreign name and a second-hand one. How it must vex their provincial souls to be compelled to call that place ahead not San Remo nor Mentone,

but only good, plain, *bourgeois* 'Hull's Cove.' To be sure, the guide-book writers and newspaper correspondents have done their best to throw a foreign and antique halo over its white houses and green blinds, but I have it in my power to bring them to grief."

"How?"

"It is matter of history that, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, this island was granted to one La Motte de Cadillac. He was what they call in Ireland an 'absentee landlord,' but he made the most of his possessions, and styled himself 'Lord of Mount Desert' to the end of his days. About a hundred years later, his grand-daughter, Madame de Gregoire, made her appearance before the General Court of Massachusetts, and asked for her heritage. It was just after the Revolution, and France had been good to us, so the legislature naturalized her and her husband, and then gave them all of the island that remained unconveyed to individual holders. They took possession of their fief, and lived there at Hull's Cove."

"Quite the lord and lady of the period, I suppose. Feudal institutions transferred to the stern and rock-bound coast of Maine."

"That is what the guide-book men and special correspondents have always claimed. You may learn from them of the mansion in which the guests were entertained in princely state, and consumed the choice productions of the courtly host's *cordon bleu* (a few French words help out amazingly, you know,)



and the choicer productions of the vintages of Burgundy. You are promised a sight of the cellars over which said mansion reared façade and turret; and you are shown the lonely graves which, being those of Papists, were denied a position inside the enclosure of the Puritan cemetery."

"That sounds well," said Somers.

"Of course it does—suspiciously well. I mistrusted it, and made up my mind to investigate. It was up-hill work, for antiquarians are scarce in these parts. I was patient and persevering and found my account. From the mouth, not of recluse nor sage, but of an elderly and unostentatious buck-board man, did truthful information reach my expectant ears. I found one who was not chary of such information. It was authentic, too, for in the home of his boyhood there dwelt one who had been the companion of Mme. de Gregoire (who died as late as 1810). And then came the swift undoing of the romancers."

"Poor things!"

"Small pity for them. They will say that if facts do not conform to their theories, so much the worse for the facts."

"And said facts are——?"

"Listen; Mme. de Gregoire was a 'real elegant lady,' but Monsieur was a fraud. He seems to have been a *bourgeois* who ran away with a noble employer's daughter. As for the stately mansion, there was none. I spoke of the traditional cellars and asked my charioteer if he could not show them

to me. He said that was quite impossible—for the simple reason that there were no cellars; but he would show me the rock on which the Gregoires' small log cabin stood."

"Bad for your romancers, that."

"Bad, indeed; but worse remains behind. The old man would sell a hundred acres at any time for a jug of rum, and this rum, with molasses, was the true inwardness of the traditional sparkling wines of Southern France. Then the only reason why the last of the race was buried outside the graveyard was that there was no fence in those days and a little less snow under a tree where they dug the grave in dead of winter, than elsewhere. The traditional Gregoires must go—go to join the Old Mill at Newport and the Cardiff Giant. Now, if you want a correctly romantic place, go to Castine, around here in Penobscot Bay. Do you remember what Drake says of it? 'Puritans and Jesuits, Huguenots and Papists, kings and commons, have all schemed and striven for the possession of this little corner of land. Richelieu, Mazarin and Colbert have plotted for it; Thurloe, Clarendon and Bolingbroke have counter-plotted.' *Quantum mutatus ab illo!* It is now a place for the canning of lobsters. Then you can find quite a pretty and pathetic story about the Jesuits coming to Mount Desert in 1613."

"Oh! my prophetic soul," said Somers, "you are leading up to my subject. Is it possible that you may be thought a crank, too?"

"Quite likely, but why?"

"What do you know about the Jesuit colony?"

"Only what any one can learn who reads the history of Maine."

"Do you know where the settlement was, and about Argall and Lay Brother Du Thet?"

"Where it was? No. Probably somewhere on this side of the island, I suppose. Argall? Was he not the fellow that came from Virginia and attacked the Frenchmen? Precious scamp, I should say. Du Thet's name I *do* recall. He was a member of the church militant who died bravely at his guns. Some one ought to have painted a picture or written a poem to do his memory honor. I don't like Jesuits, but he was a rare one of the kind."

"Do you know about his ring?"

"What ring?"

"The one Madame de Guercheville gave him."

"Never heard of it in all my life."

"Then, my dear fellow, you have something to learn, and my story will come in very well." They had turned inland and were driving along a level road, through woods and occasional clearings. Every feature of the country stood out in bold relief in the pure and crystal air. Somers drew long breaths of this air before he began.

"I suppose I caught the antiquarian fever from Ramsay," said he, "and it is a bad attack. I was often with him when he was rummaging in the ancient libraries; and, when he found the first of two old folios for which he was searching, I think I was about as much pleased as was he. You see

he had conceived the greatest possible interest in this Jesuit mission to Acadie, and had studied all the ordinarily-accepted accounts of it. Most of them were written by ecclesiastics; and you know that they are sometimes accused of *suppressio veri*—of keeping back matters which did not serve the purpose for which the narratives were compiled.”

“Of course.”

“That is the reason, no doubt, why few have ever heard of one of the most fascinating features of the mission story. I fancy one of those old bibliophiles retired from business on the sum Ramsay gave him for helping in his discovery. You see the story of the ring savored somewhat of the supernatural, unconnected with the orthodox miraculous, so to speak; and a good father would think anything of that sort wholly out of place in his narrative; hence its suppression. It seems, however, that there was one man in the St. Sauveur expedition who did not agree with the priests, but thought that all of interest concerning this expedition should be told. He seems to have been the first officer of La Saussaye’s vessel, a Provençal gentleman, a good sailor, and something of a poet. His name was Henri de la Roche Guyon, and he was a relative of the great Madame de Guercheville, the friend of the Jesuits and the patroness of the expedition.”

“Du Thet was her agent, was he not?”

“Yes; and she sent for him to come to Paris and see her before he sailed. After parting with her, the good brother met the officer, and they

journeyed to Honfleur together. They were great friends, as De la Roche Guyon declares in his monograph, which I think must have been printed for private circulation. Du Thet, he says, showed much emotion when they met on the occasion I have mentioned, and finally told him what had happened, under the pledge that he would not make it known during the lifetime of either Madame de Guercheville or the Jesuit himself. 'This pledge,' he says in his quaint style, 'I do most assuredly hold myself to have kept; but now that my right loyal friend and my most pious kinswoman—whose souls may God rest—have departed from this world, I am most freely absolved from further need of silence, and may truly tell my tale for the edification and instruction of my kinsmen and friends'—or something of that sort—style a little stilted, but excellent. Of course I am not going to inflict the whole story upon you. Ere long you may be able to read it, if you wish; and it is only necessary to tell you now, that when Du Thet parted from Madame de Guercheville, she gave him a beautiful ring which had been for many years in the possession of her family. This ring was credited by tradition with some wonderful qualities. One of these qualities was extremely useful and valuable—that of conferring (as it was claimed by this same tradition), upon one worthy to wear it, the fulfilment of his dearest hopes. Another peculiarity of this remarkable piece of jewelry was said to be that if it fell into unworthy hands, it would not remain there, but would be lost, and

only found again by one deserving of such good fortune."

"And you say this wonderful ring was given to Du Thet? If I mistake not, he was killed not very long after leaving France. Had the talisman to do with his taking off?"

"Why, of course; according to Monsieur de la Roche Guyon. He tells, in his quaint old French, a very pretty and pathetic story, which you must read. He had been intimate with the good brother; but it was only in the latter's flush of emotion, after parting with the noble lady, that he told him of the gift. The historian knew about the ring itself, and has something to say of its history; but he refers, in a very tantalizing manner, to another monograph on the subject than his own, written in old times by a member of the family, and an exhaustive one, historical, traditional and descriptive. This monograph, he says, was rare when he wrote. Of course, nothing will satisfy Ramsay but the finding of it. Talk about 'still hunts.' Why, he is using up time, money and health, and risking life, in this earnest and arduous quest."

"I can quite understand that, in a man of his tastes and temperament. It is a better business, at all events, than seeking a fortune in Wall Street, or political success at Washington."

"Cynical, but correct. But to dispose of my gentle historian, whose acquaintance you must make. Only 'once after they left Paris, says he, did Du



Thet mention the ring to him ; it was the day of their sailing from Honfleur, and he then told him that the dearest wish of his heart was to die in the land of the stranger ; ' of which declaration,' says he, ' I did most assuredly think when, ere many months had passed, mine eyes beheld him, filled with faith and holy zeal, fighting most valiantly at St. Sauveur. And I do further avow, on my faith as a Christian, that as he lay dying, and but a moment before his gentle spirit passed away, I, his friend, kneeling at his side, saw his eyes turn for an instant to the ring on his finger, and then to my face, with a look as of one who triumphed in the fulfilment of prophecy, and the granting of the wish of his heart.' "

" A good fellow, your historian."

" Yes, indeed. I have conceived an immense admiration for him. You must know that he goes on to state that, when the Jesuit's body was laid in the grave, the ring was gone ; also, that when on board ship, bound to Virginia as a captive, he, understanding English, heard a sailor telling his messmates that he had stolen it, only to lose it near a spring, before the vessel sailed. The narrative is a very detailed one, and extremely interesting ; and you will say that it was lucky for us to come upon such a literary curiosity. Unfortunately, I fear, for your estimate of my common sense, this is not all. I may be a crank, but positively I, a Protestant *au bout des ongles*, am deeply interested in the story and the e of the Jesuit. I, a devotee of exact science,

cannot get a crazy Frenchman's sentimental yarn out of my mind. I, in the days of telephones and agnosticism, am just a little infected by a story of the supernatural. Confound it," he cried, striking his knee with his hand, "it is all that inconsequential, emotional, dear, delightful fellow, Ramsay. Why, do you know, he thinks it would be quite possible to find that ring, and it would bring good fortune to its discoverer. He is, as I told you, hunting for one other book; then he wants to come out here, and has made me promise to help him. There, *liberavi animam meam*, as the Psalmist says. I have freed my mind, and now I must take a course of your wholesome companionship, to help brush away the traces of sentimentalism. The supernatural is not much in your line."

"My dear Herbert," said Seaton, "I like your story very much, and thank you for telling it to me. As I have had the good fortune to see much of the world—of strange people and strange happenings—my mental attitude towards what you have narrated, and similar matters, is something like that of good old Doctor Adam Clarke. He said that, although quite convinced in his own mind that two and two did make four, yet if any worthy person contended to him that they did make five, he would give him most respectful hearing; and might, indeed, himself adduce certain considerations in favor of that contention. Do you, to use another of your objectionable Western expressions, 'catch on'?"

"I do, most noble lord, and thank you."

"I do not think," said Seaton, "that one need be very credulous to believe that the ring might possibly be found; also that, considering the very important proviso that its successful finder and wearer must be worthy, it might bring him good luck. It is a pretty conceit, at all events, and you might be worse employed than in finding the exact spot where the Colony of St. Sauveur was situated. I suppose you will do that when your friend Ramsay comes. In the mean time, be good enough to notice that we are approaching the water again, the pretty piece of it which separates Mount Desert from Lamoine—the Narrows."

Still enveloped in the pure atmosphere, the land across these Narrows seemed but a few hundred feet distant. The hills behind Sullivan lay in deep shadow, while the waters of the strait in the foreground shone in intense sunlight. Along them, swiftly ploughing its way, appeared a small steamer. Seaton laughed when he saw it.

"There goes my friend Jack Harlow's excursion round the island. It has been set for three separate days before this, and weather or something else has prevented. He told me this morning that, when it at last seemed as if they might go, the captain said, 'Twarn't nothin' but just your perseverance. That's the way; no *vacilliatin'*, but just settin' your mind on a thing, an' then doin' it.' Jack says that is all very well, but if he ever should be caught organizing an expedition again, they might make a note of it.

You see the steamer costs just fifty dollars for the day, and Jack is like John Gilpin. 'Although on pleasure he is bent, he has a frugal mind.' He thought he ought to have twenty-five people to pay two dollars apiece and, when that number was promised, he engaged the boat. Then the people began backing out, by twos and threes, with, as Jack says, a positive moral obliquity as to their financial responsibilities. But the trip round the island is worth some tribulation. We must try it ourselves."

Turning to the left, the road taken by the driver led to the bluff above the shore.

"Here is another of the cockney sights. They call it 'The Ovens.' Some rocks have been hollowed in a very simple manner, by the action of the water. Such things differ entirely from the really splendid sights which Nature offers us here, but they have a purpose, and a wholly legitimate and agreeable one—the affording of reasonable excuses for the expeditions of fair maidens and ingenuous youths. Such sights should be seen by young eyes and in liking, if not loving, companionship. Therefore I shall not spoil the Ovens for you, but leave you to see them in the society of your 'best girl.' "

"But I have no best, nor even better, girl."

"As far as my observation goes, the supply of the article here is in excess of the demand."

"But I am not in the market. I have been too long away from society to enjoy the companionship of the fashionable young women of the

period. I should be quite out of my place among them."

"My dear Herbert," said Seaton, "you make a great mistake when you talk in that way. Most of the cant, saving your presence, about fashionable people is as untrue as it is foolish, and should never appear outside the columns of socialistic papers. Speaking from a somewhat large experience, I should say, on the whole, that the best, as well as the most cultured and agreeable people of my acquaintance, would come under that ban. I have known as many saints behind brown-stone fronts as in the 'lowly dwellings of the poor,' and never found pretty toilets and lovely manners incompatible with the possession of all the cardinal virtues. Ah! here is a party coming—two four-horse buckboards. Young people, too. That Gainsborough hat on the second seat of the front one looks familiar. Yes, by George! it is she. Now, Herbert, Attention! Eyes left!"

CHAPTER III.

A Maiden Fair to See.

It is the experience of most lives that there is no gradual "leading up" to the crises by which they are marked; and it has been most truly said that "it is always the unexpected that happens." The passengers in the drawing-room car, sitting, in pomp of silver plate and mirrors and stamped leather, and dozing, reading, or lunching, are vouchsafed no warning of the broken rail or misplaced switch just ahead of them. The merry party in the sail-boat would see but a grotesque unfitness in the suggestion of the squall ready to descend upon them, and of the approach, on dusky wing, of Azrael, the Angel of Death. And in how few careers, too, are the momentous happenings which bring not sorrow, but joy and peace, foreseen or foretold?

The vehicles approached each other; the light one, in which were Somers and his friend, and the larger ones, of novel aspect to the younger man. He had time to notice their peculiar construction—the long, thin spruce boards stretching the very considerable distance between the axles, and continually bending and springing. Then the foremost came abreast of the "cut-under;" he raised his eyes,

and, in the kaleidoscope of bright and merry faces, of gay color, of pretty mountain dress and striped "blazer," of smiles and glances, the face and figure of one person detached themselves, rose above all the rest, and then eclipsed them. Who shall explain the curious, subtle influence evolved from the rare personality of a beautiful young maiden, couched in the swift glance from her bright eyes, going straight to its chosen mark, as does the electric spark from pole to pole? What mattered it that Somers had seen lovely girls before—scores, hundreds of them; many, doubtless, as handsome in the eyes of others as she whose beauty had just dawned upon him? Something new and strange had happened. The vehicles sped on their opposite ways, and he was sitting in his seat as before, with his genial and smiling companion by his side; the same breeze, with the coolness of the distant iceberg in it, fanned his cheek; the same bright sunlight lay on the sparkling waters of Frenchman's Bay; but, for better or for worse, a new day had dawned for Herbert Somers. Under the Gainsborough hat, and on the second seat of the buck-board, he had, he said to himself, found his fate!

"Seaton," asked he, "who is that girl? I saw her bow to you."

"Of course," replied his friend, "all you need know about her is that she is a fashionable girl. Quite the rage, I assure you. Is pronounced a belle alike by the 'dudes' of New York and in the Faubourg Saint Germain of Washington. Puts her

out of court with you, my consistent cynic. Your views are not formed to be lightly changed, eh?"

"Seaton," said Somers, "your sarcasms move me not. A glance from those eyes would make a man change his allegiance to dearer things than a well-formed judgment. Did you never hear of the clerk in the department at Washington who was warned that his 'offensive partisanship' might cost him his place? 'Do you not know that a change of administration is speedily coming?' his friend asked him. 'I would like to see the administration,' he answered, 'that could change faster than I can.'" Seaton laughed heartily.

"I have not told you her name yet," said he, "but I will. It is Helen Thurston. Pretty, is she not? I pointed her out, the other day, to an old and seasoned New York society and club man, who came up here in a yacht. She was walking on the hotel veranda with a youth—a really golden youth, too, for he came into a little fortune of two millions ten days later. My veteran friend looked at her with eyes which, critical at first, speedily became admiring. 'She is a dream,' said he. I suppose there came to this weather-beaten man of the world some recollection of the blissful time when his illusions were undisturbed; when he, too, dwelt in Arcadia; when some such sweet face, perhaps, grew brighter at his coming; when —" He stopped, and then a remarkable thing happened. Somers saw that a strong emotion had seized upon the cool, cynical, clever man in whom he had never seen a trace of it

before. In him, also, had some tender chord of memory been struck. He averted his face and sat silent, as, with ready tact, did his friend. After a while, the latter heard him hum an air, almost under his breath. He knew it well—the last strains of that beautiful and pathetic song, “When Sparrows Build”—and the words fitted themselves to the melody in an instant :

“ We shall part no more in the wind and the rain,
Where our last farewell was said ;
But perhaps I shall see thee and know thee again,
When the sea gives up her dead.”

And then he remembered that, after the loss of the *Ville du Havre*, when he himself was in college, Seaton had gone at once to Europe and remained for a long time ; and that he had then heard talk of some one dear to his friend lying “ full fathom five ” in the stormy Atlantic. His sympathies were aroused in an instant, but he said nothing until Seaton faced about, with a little twitch of his shoulders, and took out his cigar case.

“ Herbert,” said he, “ you are a good fellow. Give me a light and have a cheroot yourself. We will drive to the club, and I will put your name down there. The newspapers and the harbor view will be better company than I am at present, and by and by you shall know Miss Helen.”

The effect of the meeting of fair lady and stalwart man had been all on one side. Not a single beat had pretty Helen's pulse quickened when she

saw Somers sitting by the side of her good friend Seaton. A new man was, of course, an acquisition, and she would be glad to know him, and doubtless would do so in due time ; but there was no scarcity of men in *her* train, however it might be with Bar Harbor in general. So, five minutes after the carriages passed each other on the road to the Ovens, she had forgotten the meeting, and was listening to the flattering words of the young millionaire, Gordon Browning by name, to whom Seaton had alluded. She had not been a belle two seasons for nothing, nor reigned a social queen without knowing well how cheerfully men in general owned her sway.

As the painter, unable to transfer to his canvas the elusive charm of some rare landscape, or the glories of a grand cloud display, flings his brush down in despair, so must the prosaic scribe contemplate the setting down on paper of the beauties and graces of his heroine. Can a pen catch her changing expressions, the fleeting traces of feeling on her face, the charmed atmosphere of purity and grace surrounding that rare creation, a lovely young girl ? And who is the presumptuous writer that he should claim to understand, or attempt to describe to others, the fascinating complexities of her character, her ever-changing moods, her pretty ways ? Far be it from him to hope for more than a rude outline, as it were, of description ; trusting that the imagination of those of his readers whose happy fortune it is to know such charming creatures, may partially supply his deficiencies.

Helen Thurston was approaching her twentieth birthday. The daughter of a brave officer, who died in the service, she was born in New England, but had lived most of her life elsewhere, and part of it south of Mason and Dixon's line. To her old home, however, her heart always fondly turned—to the bold, rocky coast, the green hills and fields, the clear streams, of the North; and when the soft, Southern winds and the spreading verdure betokened the advent of summer, she would fain sing with the homesick “maid, who to London had strayed”:

“Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain would I be,
Hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree;
While sadly I roam, I regret my dear home,
Where lads and young lassies are making the hay.
The merry bells ring, and the birds sweetly sing,
And maidens and meadows are pleasant and gay;
O! the oak, and the ash, and the bonny ivy tree,
They grow so green in the North countree.”

She had rare gifts, this gentle maiden; a warm, loving heart, a capital head, and the sweetest of manners. Both men and women loved her and talked about her, in winter cities and summer casinos; at the carnival at New Orleans, on St. John's River steamers, and in the old fort at St. Augustine; at White House receptions, Delmonico balls, and Newport dinners. They said she was as good and sensible as she was pretty; that her face was a true index of her lovely disposition, and that her dainty and coquettish ways were as unaffected

as they were captivating. Oh! but she was a rare favorite, this fair lady; and never more so than when she returned from her buck-board drive that pleasant, sunny forenoon, and stood on the wide veranda of the great hotel. And then her morning's pleasure was crowned by two peculiar triumphs. First, a newspaper correspondent, who had once been presented to her, received such a pretty smile in response to his bow that he rushed to his room and added a number of lines to No. IV. of that well-known series of "breezy" letters, entitled "Booms from Bar Harbor." Said he: "The question of the belleship of this ever-popular summer resort, usually so difficult to determine, is this year promptly and conclusively settled in favor of Miss Helen Thurston." Second, one of two young ladies, who were gazing at her, said to her companion, loud enough to reach Miss Helen's quick ear: "My dear, I am getting points from that costume of hers; I simply *must* have one like it."

And, by the way, as this newspaper correspondent was far more experienced in describing beauty adorned than is the present writer, what better than, at this juncture, to quote further from him?

"Miss Thurston is of medium height, and slender, graceful figure; and her hands and feet are particularly small and delicate. Her features are regular, her hair an exquisite golden brown, and just a little wavy; her dainty mouth a veritable 'Cupid's bow.' There is no greater charm about her than her eyes, which are large and of a lovely red-brown, with a

most winning expression. Miss Thurston's costumes" (he, too, had overheard the girl on the veranda) "are greatly admired. She wore to-day one of red cloth, cut in yachting style, and a large Gainsborough hat of black straw faced with velvet."

Then followed a well-meant but extremely incorrect biographical sketch; and as the correspondent, in his enthusiasm, wrote less distinctly than usual, the compositors made sad work of the whole thing.

Hardly had the young lady made her appearance at the hotel when Seaton, now quite his old self, brought Somers to present him.

"Miss Helen," said he, "my friend, Mr. Herbert Somers, desires the pleasure of your acquaintance, and I beg you to treat him kindly. He was driving with me when we met you this morning, and, ever since, he has been talking about your 'corruscating on his vision,' or something of that sort."

"Miss Thurston," said Herbert, "I suppose you know my friend's weakness in the matter of hyperbole. Like *Poobah*, 'he's under treatment for it.'"

"Conscience! what black ingratitude," cried Seaton.

"Oh! Mr. Somers," said Helen, laughing, "I have known Mr. Seaton a long time, and we are great friends."

"Then I envy him more than ever," said Somers, with a bow.

"There are two seats vacated at our table," said Helen; "would you not like to take them?"

"Of all things," said Seaton; "but have we not

more deserving competitors? How about that youth with the two million dollars?"

The young girl shot a glance at him from her brown eyes.

"What care I for gold or silver,
What care I for house or land?"

quoted she. "I want to be amused while I am eating my Bar Harbor meals, so please come, to oblige me."

"We want no better fortune," said Somers, and they entered the dining-room. The young fellow was in high spirits, especially as he secured the seat by the fair lady. Even the very plain viands seemed to have

"—— suffered a sea-change
Into something new and strange."

What was it to him that the chowder was lukewarm and the meat tough, when he could look into those red-brown eyes? He could almost find it in his heart to argue with Seaton when he spoke disparagingly of the cuisine. Said the latter:

"My dear Miss Helen, could we not make another place still at the table, and then install therein one like that delightful and useful man of whom the late Theodore Winthrop wrote, in a charming book? On a wild trip across the Plains he would talk so delightfully about the fried bacon and sugarless coffee that the party quite forgot what they were eating. I can imagine him here. In a short time he would make us think we were dining at seven o'clock

instead of 1.30. (Oh! ye gods, what an hour!) He would make us see that perspiring youth yonder dressed in a black evening suit instead of a 'loud' flannel one; a few really well-cooked dishes would replace the 'magnificent misery' of this too voluminous bill of fare; and, in our new-found fancy, 'good digestion would wait on appetite, and health on both.' And, as we left this refectory, each could truly exclaim: 'Fate cannot harm me; I have dined to-day.'"

"But, Mr. Seaton," said Helen, "I do not find this food so bad; and you yourself do not seem to be miserable over it."

"*Quand on a vingt ans*, as the French say, my dear Miss Helen, it matters not so much. As for me, I thrive in spite of my meals; not, as it should be, in consequence of them. But, tell me, will there not be a 'hop' here to-night?"

"Yes, and I shall expect you to ask me to dance."

"In most cases, Miss Helen, your wishes are fulfilled in advance, as far as I am concerned; but, really, I wish to retain your friendship, and I dare not put it to the test of a dance with me; my accomplishments in that line being, let me assure you, those of a past generation."

"Miss Thurston," interrupted Herbert eagerly, "I beg you to accept me as a substitute, and to give me as many dances as you can possibly spare."

"I second that motion," said Seaton, "not from any preference for my pushing young friend here, but for the reason I have just named."

"Very well," said the young girl, to whose cheek Herbert's vehemence had brought a slight blush, "but the whole thing is very informal, and you can ask me when we meet in the ball-room."

"I suppose some of the noble cottagers will show us the light of their countenances to-night," said Seaton. "They may look down on hotels and their occupants, but I do not know what they would do without them. When there are 'hops' and the like here, I notice that they are always the first to come and the last to go."

"But you must remember, Seaton," said Somers, "that, as the boys said of their fathers, 'they are, after all, our fellow-creatures.'"

"I know that, and most of them very agreeable fellow-creatures, too. All the same, I regret their devotion to the fetich of formal cottage life and summer house-keeping, and their establishment of a lot of Indian reservations, so to speak, along this pretty shore. Why, bless my soul, I was walking down to the rocks yesterday, and was actually warned, in an acrid female voice, to keep off a strip of scraggy grass hardly distinguishable from the path. No Brummagem Newport customs wanted on Mount Desert, say I. You may call me a heretic or a Communist, but I declare that if you give the cottagers a chance, they will spoil every jolly watering-place from Eastport to the Dry Tortugas. Bismillah! I have spoken. I say, Miss Helen, I wish you would wear that hat at the hop to-night. The young girl laughed.

"I am glad you like it," said she, "but it would never do in the world. Why, do you know that there was a dreadful picture of some one supposed to be myself, with it on, in a New York Sunday paper? Was it not dreadful?"

"What a shame!" said Herbert, looking as if he would gladly charge, as her true knight, lance in rest, against the whole newspaper fraternity. Seaton smiled.

"The picture was dreadful, I dare say," said he, "but the young man doubtless meant well. If you want to escape such things, you can do so by being plain, and badly dressed, and unpopular. There is an alternative for you."

"I don't care," said Helen, with a pretty petulance, "I wish they would let me alone. I have not fared so badly, however, as one of my cousins. He is not rich, and was very attentive to the daughter of a wealthy man. Finally, she had half consented to marry him, and he was trying to muster up courage to speak to her old father, when, to his horror, a Sunday paper announced the engagement! Boiling with rage he went down—with a club, he says—to the office and asked for the editor. On the head of the man who appeared he poured his wrath. 'How dare you make such an announcement?' he asked. And then the man, in the gentlest possible manner, asked, 'But are you quite sure that you are *not* engaged?' My cousin said that this reply, 'broke him all up'—whatever that may be."

"I will tell you what it is, Miss Helen," whispered

Seaton, as the party, laughing at her story, left the table. "It is the condition of a young man who sees you for the first time. I am an old fellow, you know, and an old friend, and can tell you such things. For an awful example, take a man not three feet from you. This morning he was at ease with the world; now he does not know whether he is standing on his head or his heels."

"Nonsense," said Helen, with a pretty blush. "You must not say such things to me. Mr. Somers, I shall see you this evening, I hope. We are going to a *musical* this afternoon, and then out to tea. Oh! would you not like to join a party to ascend Green Mountain to-morrow forenoon? We start at eleven from the hotel." Of course, both men were glad to accept, and the young lady left them standing on the veranda and surrounded by a jolly, chattering crowd.

In the afternoon, in a fine "cat-boat," and with a capital breeze, they ran out past Egg Rock. Somers was in the highest spirits,—in that rare frame of mind only possible in the earliest stages of the gentle passion, and before its sting has had time to make itself felt. Seaton could not help humming:

"Nothing venture, nothing win,
Blood is thick, but water's thin,
In for a penny, in for a pound,
'Tis love that makes the world go round."

But Somers refused, apparently, to make any personal application of the merry lines. He was at

peace with all the world. The sky never seemed so blue, nor the breeze so fresh. He listened with interest to the quaint remarks and yarns of the skipper, and expressed much sympathy with him in his ambition to keep the Egg Rock light-house. It was pretty rough there in winter, he said, when the waves beat entirely over the house and burst in the windows, but he would get six hundred and fifty dollars a year (he named this sum almost with bated breath), and have good fishing and gunning.

"Think, Herbert," said Seaton, *sotto voce*, as the skipper was busy with the evolution of tacking, "how purely relative everything is in this world. To this good fellow, that pittance represents great wealth."

"Ever been down to the light on Mount Desert Rock?" asked the captain.

"No;" said Seaton, "but I have heard of it. Whittier says:

" 'There, gloomily against the sky,
The Dark Isles rear their summits high ;
And Desert Rock, abrupt and bare,
Lifts its gray turrets in the air.' "

"Sounds nice," said the seaman, "but if a feller was to look for 'turrets' down there he'd get mighty badly left. Why, 'taint nothing but a pile of boulders, flung together, sort of promiscuous. There's fourteen souls on it, including women and children, and it's twenty-seven miles from Bar Harbor and 'way out of sight of land. Hello! there's a steam

yacht coming in. It's the *Constellation*, sure as you're alive. That's the New York squadron's flag."

"The *Constellation* belongs to Wilcox, does she not?" asked Somers.

"Yes. I met Shortman in New York before I came here, and he told me he was to be one of the party on board of her for a cruise on the coast of Maine. He had much to say about a French count who was to be with them. By the way, he said he was a very fascinating fellow, and a great favorite with the women."

"I 'have no use for' French counts," said Herbert, "and I am not enamored of Wilcox, either."

"Oh! he is not a bad fellow in his way. You will meet him to-night or to-morrow."

"Not if I see him first," said Somers.

"Herbert," said Seaton, "your slang is quite to the point, I admit, but you use too much of it; and you must take men, even French counts, and British visitors—and 'dudes'—as you find them, and not be aggressive. Now, captain, I think we will make for home."

As they sprang ashore, after a speedy run before the wind, a gun was fired from the *Constellation*, just coming to anchor; and, in some inexplicable way, it affected Herbert uncomfortably. He did his best to throw off the absurd feeling, as he called it to himself; and walked briskly, with Seaton, up the plank path to their rooms.

Just before nine o'clock that night, the large hall

and veranda of the hotel contained such a conglomeration of human beings as is rarely seen. At a very considerable distance from the house, as one approached, could be heard a noise almost as of breakers on a distant shore. Louder and louder it resounded as the distance lessened, until it amounted to a roar. Intermingled in a curious discord were the deep voices of men and the higher pitched ones of women; the different accents and intonations of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and the South; while sometimes there stood out from all the rest, as does the tiny piccolo above the whole military band, those tones which have been happily described as "born of salt fish and east winds."

"That cuts through me like a knife," said Somers, as, with Seaton by his side, he passed a pretty and well-dressed girl eagerly describing, in the most painful of these tones, some experience of the day to a listening group. "Do you suppose that young woman knows how dreadful her voice is?"

"I give it up," replied Seaton. "If anything could make me an exile from my native land, it would be the voices of some of my countrywomen."

They elbowed a path through the dense crowd, and Somers soon found his way to where Helen was sitting, on a step of the wide staircase, with several other girls, and not a few youths in curious and variegated attire, about her. Having been introduced to this court of the gracious young queen, he had time but for a few words before music was heard, and a move was promptly begun. The great assembly

dispersed, part taking positions on the veranda, massed about the windows of a low-studded but very large ballroom, and the rest crowding into this room. At the farther end, on a small stage, sat the musicians; and as Somers, keeping as close to Helen as he could, entered, they began with fairly good spirit, the *Estudiantina* waltz of Waldteufel. He looked at the young girl, and his eyes asked for the dance quite as effectively as his words. In another moment, the charmed time had come for him. He was a good dancer, and once and again, as the too short evening sped away, was he granted the favor of the princess of all partners. Seaton came to him early, to say that he was going outside.

"The array of beauty is something bewildering," said he, "and I have arrived at that age when the sight of it brings pleasure without the alloy introduced by too great personal interest therein. Look at that lovely Southern girl there; and that pretty creature from Philadelphia, and those young beauties from Washington; ah! yes, I know what you will say, and I quite agree with you, my dear boy. I never saw her looking more charming. But I really must go, for I am not in love—and the smell of the naphtha spoils for me even this dream of fair women. Then, besides, I am too sorry for the poor band. The clarionet man just told me that 'dis vas von tam brohibition blace, und I hab for drie day nicht ein glass of pier drinkt.' Farewell."

As the "hop" drew near its close, Herbert was standing by the door leading to the veranda, and

looking with wistful eyes at his fair lady dancing with some one else. He felt a sudden change in the wind, and a slight gust chilled him. Just then, he heard his name called, and turned to see a rather tall, thin man, of uncertain age, with carefully brushed hair and a small, reddish moustache.

"Ah! Shortman, how are you?" he asked.

"Glad to meet you, my dear boy," said the newcomer. Let me present you to a friend of mine, Count"—another man came out of the shadow and into the doorway, just as a fresh gust made Herbert shiver. "Allow me to present Mr. Somers. Herbert, this is Count Victor de Meaubré, of Paris."

CHAPTER IV.

A Foreigner of Distinction.

COUNT VICTOR DE MEAUBRÉ bowed in an effusive manner in response to Herbert's formally polite acknowledgment of the introduction.

The count was a man of quite striking appearance, of good figure, rather slender, and with small, bright eyes. He wore a beard, brown, closely trimmed and pointed, over which his moustache curled at the sides. When he smiled, his lips parted wide, showing large, white teeth. He, as well as the companion who presented him, was in full evening dress, and neat diamond studs glistened in the front of his snowy shirt.

"I am delighted to make the acquaintance of monsieur," said he, with a slight accent. "My good friend Shortman has spoken often to me of him, and now that I see the face of monsieur, I have the idea that it is not for the first time. He has been, perhaps, in Paris? Yes? It is two years? Ah; I was sure of it! Somewhere in the American colony—I am *chez moi* there—at the Grand Prix—but it matters not. It will come yet to me; and in the meantime we meet again in a place the most agreeable."

As he was speaking, Herbert looked him straight

in the face. In some strange, incomprehensible manner, the conviction had seized upon him that this man would be his enemy. This conviction was strong enough to resist the correcting influence of his common sense, and these conventional civilities were to him as the formal salute of two swordsmen before their weapons flash in the assault at arms. The Frenchman bore his scrutiny with easy grace; and Herbert could but acknowledge to himself that he found no flaw in his appearance or address. Just then Seaton approached and greeted Shortman, who in turn presented him to the count. The two men stepped to one side after the introduction had taken place, and Shortman came close to Herbert.

"Genuine swell that, my dear boy," said he, wiping his gold-rimmed eye-glasses, before replacing them. "Old family in Normandy. Wilcox had letters about him, from his brother, who met him in London. Has been in the Foreign Office in Paris. Had a great success in Newport. Quite the rage there; *follement lionné*, don't you know. Dined out at the best houses, every night, and the girls quite lost their heads about him."

"*Connu*," said Herbert. "Did any of the French Legation happen to be there?"

"No; curiously enough. R—— has gone home on leave for the summer, and the Secretary is at New London. The count wanted to meet them."

"All right, Shortman," said Herbert. "You and Wilcox are welcome to him. I cannot flatter myself that what I may think of the count is of any

importance, but, before admitting a man like that to my intimacy, or presenting him to others, I should want better credentials than the indorsement of Wilcox and his brother, who are a couple of tuft-hunters, and have been completely sold and swindled more than once, in their efforts to know the race of noble lords and dukes.

"All prejudice on your part, my dear boy," said Shortman. "The real trouble with you fellows is that you are jealous of these fascinating foreigners. Never mind, come and smoke a cigarette. Ah, here is Seaton. What have you done with the count, old man?"

"Rather ask what he has done with me," replied Seaton. "He wished to be presented to all the young women at once. I hardly knew him well enough for that, but I fortunately found a way of escape. I saw my old acquaintance, Mrs. Renton, signalling me with those black eyes of hers—egad, they were very bright eyes twenty-five years ago—and I knew very well what she wanted. I told the count—by the way, who knows that he is a count?—who stands sponsor for him?" Shortman pulled at the end of his thin moustache.

"I do not see why you should be so suspicious," said he. "We have had him on the yacht, and a man's character comes out in such close quarters. We found him quite *comme il faut*; and then, as I just told Somers, Wilcox had letters from his brother about——"

"Now, Shortman," interrupted Seaton, "this is a

little too much. It is just the ready confidence and blind trust of such fellows as the Wilcoxes, and, saving your presence, your good self, that invites foreign *chevaliers d'industrie* to practise their wiles on us poor, simple Americans. Mind, I am not saying that your man here was not born in the purple, and I am myself to blame for introducing him; but really, after your last experience, I could hardly expect that you would unload one of the Wilcox grade of noble lords on me. I must lose no time in telling Mrs. Renton that I know nothing about him. She is amply able to take care of herself, but when it comes to turning even a remotely possible wolf adrift in a flock of pretty lambs, I cannot have any responsibility. Dear me, I believe I am too late. Look at them, grouped about madame, and their smiling faces. It will do no good to speak now."

"That is the way everywhere," said Shortman, who had shown no annoyance at Seaton's arraignment of him. "He is exceedingly popular with the girls. A charming young married woman—you know her, Seaton—who had made his acquaintance at Newport, was very funny when talking about him the other night. 'I really don't think I am old enough to be obliged to give up my men,' said she, 'but as soon as Belle Lester and her set saw me talking to the count, they came to us and put their arms round me and began caressing me. Of course, I knew what they wanted; but I just patted their hands and went on talking.' Bright woman, that little friend of ours. She is always great fun."

During this conversation, Herbert Somers' eyes had instinctively turned to Helen Thurston, and found her sitting in a farther corner of the room. They lingered on her charming face and figure, and had almost drawn their owner after them, when he saw Mrs. Renton and the count moving towards the spot. Again but a few moments, and the foreigner bent low before her, and then a feeling new, strange, and uncomfortable, took possession of Somers. Like most men whose earlier youth has been passed without any serious wound from Cupid's dart, he felt the first one all the more keenly for his previous immunity. Who can expect a whole-souled, manly fellow, with an indefinite capacity for affection, to brook, when in the first stages of a great passion, even a possible rival near the throne? Would you have done it contentedly yourself, oh! wise reader, to whom the flight of years has brought the habit of sober second thought? Is there not, in a corner of your memory, a trace of those feelings which sometimes seize upon young lovers, driving hope and peace from their minds and heralding the advent of despair?

Herbert Somers, as he subsequently reminded himself, had just sense enough to do the right thing for the moment. He withdrew from the group of which he had been a member, found his hat and passed out of the room. He crossed the stream of promenaders on the wide veranda, descended the steps, and walked quickly along the plank path toward the jetties. The strains of music from the

band and the curious confused noise of voices grew fainter and fainter as he left them behind ; and he began to hear the low wash of the sea. Turning to the right, as he neared the principal wharf, he entered upon a path running along the shore above the rocks. The full moon was shining, and the sea gleamed like silver in its rays. The lights flashed from the yachts, and sounds of song, of laughter, of the splash of oars and dipping of paddles came to his ears. On the near horizon rose islands, showing in softened outlines against the sky ; and, with a loud rattle, the anchor sank from the bow of an incoming steamer to its holding ground in the deep water. To all such scenes and influences Herbert Somers had the keenest sensibility ; and, almost ere he knew it, the spirit of the solemn, peaceful night descended upon him. In the presence of its greatness, his little troubles were dwarfed, and, after a long stay, he walked to the cottage.

When Seaton, cigar in mouth, looked into his room before going to his own, he saw him sleeping soundly, with his arm under his head.

"I wonder what became of him to-night," said he to himself. "It was just as well that he did not see what a dead set that confounded Frenchman made at Helen. If he should be on the Green Mountain party in the morning, I fear Herbert would pass a *mauvais quart d'heure*."

"No ! no !" rang out in the high-pitched voice of Mrs. Renton at eleven o'clock next forenoon, from

the steps of the veranda. "There are quite men enough in that stage for you girls. The count must come with me in the next one. *Mais certainement, mon cher compte. Je le veux, voila tout !* Yes, that is right, driver ; go on and let the next one come up." And Herbert Somers blessed her from the bottom of his heart. Helen had greeted him with her usual charm of manner, and the obnoxious Frenchman was not in sight as the Green Mountain stages came to the door. Just, however, as the party were taking their seats, the count made his appearance and was pushing his way into the vehicle in which Somers was ensconced by the side of the young girl. That next beyond was the wealthy young Browning was of comparatively little importance to Herbert. With this young countryman, or any like him, he would break a lance, and let the better man win ; but of the Frenchman he could think but with a sort of Berseker rage. How Helen could ever fancy such a fellow, he found it hard to conceive. It was with genuine delight that he detected, as he thought, a look of apprehension in her face, and almost a shudder, as the man approached ; also, an evident manifestation of relief when the imperious tones of Mrs. Renton, a well-known and despotic manager of expeditions, called him (clearly very loath to go) to her side. This was proof positive, thought Herbert, that the Frenchman was no favorite of Helen's, and he heartily blessed Mrs. Renton for playing, unwittingly though it might be, his cards for him. Thus, his spirits rose to a high pitch ;

and, as the stage rolled through the village and up a country road, he found himself rejoicing in the beautiful weather, the rapid motion, above all, the charming company. In the fulness of his joy, he did not even try to wholly monopolize the girl at his side, but magnanimously gave the young Crœsus an occasional inning. A pleasant drive brought the stages to the edge of Eagle Lake, a picturesque sheet of water lying high among the hills and receiving the shadow of Green Mountain on its placid surface. In a curious little steamer this was speedily crossed, and a landing was made at a point whence a railroad led to the summit. On this railroad stood ready a single car; and an engine, working by powerful cogs on a third rail, seemed to be expressing, by frequent puffs, its eagerness to push this car up the steep incline. Again did fortune favor Herbert. Mrs. Renton had still need of her cavalier, and she held him as did the ancient mariner the wedding guest; so the young people were placed on the curious, sloping seats of the car, as they had been in the stage. Then the ascent began. Over slopes easy and steep; crossing, trestle-borne, deep depressions; bound fast to rocky ledges, the rails ran up, always up, until they crowned the crest. With loud clanking of gearing, with something strangely like panting and gasping, the engine mounted the grade. Slowly, foot by foot, cog by cog, the distance was covered, the lake left behind, the summit approached. When walking was practicable, men dropped from the platform at the side

of the car and easily kept pace with it, but for the most part the way was barred by blasted stumps and jagged boulders. Ever and anon the track would seem to rise almost perpendicular before the car; but still, with inexorable force and steady grasp, its dumb servant propelled it upward.

"Our motto is 'Excelsior,' is it not?" said Helen, gaily. "Should we not feel like the boy who 'bore through snow and ice, a banner with that strange device'? I hope it will not be our fate to be found by a big dog in the morning."

"I sincerely echo that hope," said Herbert, "but we need not fear. Ambitious youths carrying banners went out before cog-wheel railroads came in."

"When I was last in Hong Kong," said Seaton, "I heard a version of that poem in 'Pidgin English,' irreverent as to Longfellow, but funny when you know the lingo. For instance, the verse beginning, 'Beware the pass, the old man said,' is:

" 'No can walkee, olo man speakee he
Bimeby lain come, no can see
Hab got water, welly wide
Maskee, mi *must* go topside.' "

Amidst laughter and remarks of "How absurd," and "How ridiculous," and something about a *langue horrible* from the count, some distance behind, he went on:

" 'The pious monks of St. Bernard 'are turned into 'joss-pidgin man.' None of them here now, by the way. I say, Herbert, if this were early in the

seventeenth, instead of late in the nineteenth century, you could find some not very far distant, eh? I am inclined to think that your friend Du Thet was something quite in the 'Excelsior' line."

"And, pray, who was your friend Du Thet?" asked Helen, turning her big eyes on Herbert's face.

"If you want to know, I will gladly tell you some day," he replied; "but as we are at our journey's end, I will merely mention now that he was, as am I, the most devoted servant of a fair lady." He sprang from the car to the platform at the summit. "Allow me to help you," he added, and Seaton, coming close to him a moment later, whispered in a quizzical tone,

"Not badly put, my dear fellow. We are improving fast."

The day was beautifully clear, and the splendid views which lie before the eyes of the climbers of Green Mountain were seen through a transparent air, and under the brightest of sunlight; the mainland at the north and the bridge connecting it with the island; the mountains, valleys and lakes around and below; the winding shore and the dim ranges on the horizon; the bays, the archipelago, the blue, still, far-reaching sea. Long did the party gaze upon the wonderful sight, of course with varying interest and emotion, but all impressed. Herbert saw the wistful light come into Helen's eyes.

"It is almost too beautiful," she said softly.

“Tell me, Mr. Somers, of whom was Mr. Seaton speaking when he referred to a friend of yours in the seventeenth century? • Was it a French priest, and were there any of them here?”

“Yes,” said Herbert, “long ago. The poet says of one :

“ ‘The hermit priest, who lingers now
On the bald mountain’s shrubless brow,
While gazing on the scene below
May half forget the dreams of home
That nightly with his slumbers come ;
For here beneath him lies unrolled,
Bathed deep in morning’s flood of gold,
A vision gorgeous as the dream
Of the beatified may seem :
A mortal’s glimpse beyond the pale—
A moment’s lifting of the veil.’ ”

“I think,” said Helen, after a short pause, “that the reality exceeds the description.” Even had Herbert Somers been a coldly critical observer, instead of a fervent admirer, he would have been moved by the lovely expression, the bright eyes, the tender tone of the fair girl. As it was, he could have looked at her and listened to her forever ; but, in another moment, an interruption and his undoing came as one.

“I am *desolé* to derange mademoiselle,” said the count, coming quietly behind them, “but Madame Renton bade me say that dinner awaits her. Ah, permit me,” and he presented his hand to help her step from the large boulder on which she had

been standing. She hesitated, looked at Herbert, then turned again to the count and accepted his aid. The Frenchman had never taken his eyes off her—those small, gleaming eyes—and Herbert, in his mingled surprise and annoyance, vowed to himself that he could see the look in them of the snake's, as they gleam upon their prey.

His fortune had been—like Mrs. Renton's caprice—too good to last. The count had been *distract*, and anything but amusing, she told Seaton, when the latter joined her and her attendant, on the veranda of the mountain hotel, and after she had sent the Frenchman to gather the party for dinner. "Old friends are best, after all, Seaton," said she, with a little sentiment in her voice (Mrs. Renton addressed her male acquaintance by their surnames, without prefix, very soon after she knew them), "and now I must insist on your devoting yourself to me. You are to take the place at my right, remember, and the rest can arrange themselves as they like."

And thus it happened that Herbert, walking slowly to the hotel and entering last of all, saw Helen sitting by the count and apparently absorbed in his conversation, as he leaned close to her. A sorry meal was it for him, that dinner on the mountain top. He was long to remember it—strange as you, madam, and you, most sensible sir, among the readers to whom this young fellow has been introduced, will think it of him to be thus affected. Here is a fellow, you will say, portrayed

as strong-minded and long-headed,—a man of the world and of affairs—who has known a girl about twenty-four hours, and falls so desperately in love that he cannot live away from her side, expects to monopolize her, and is asinine enough to work himself into depths of despair or a blind rage, because she talks to another man. Such things are bad form in these days, and this fellow is in danger of turning out a poor stick. Yes, but, with all respect to your superior knowledge and experience, what Herbert Somers felt is what just such manly fellows as he—not those curious beings, mind you, called ‘ladies’ men,’ nor those to whom what they call affairs of the heart are common experiences—have done since the world was young, and will be doing when the world is much older than it is now. What though his formal introduction to her were but yesterday, it seemed to him that he had known her all his life. Short acquaintance? Why, it was of her that he had dreamed over and over again, through long years; of her and of no other woman under the sun. It was her portrait that he had painted on the tablets of his fancy, her image that had taken shape in the smoke of camp-fires under the bright stars. Know her well? Why, he knew her better than could any one else. While he had been engrossed in man’s work, she had been treading the flower-strewn path which was to cross his at last, and they had met—that was all. Ah! (here spoke his evil genius to him) but half an hour ago she smiled on you, but no word or look of yours brought such

flush to her cheeks as was there just now when that man whispered to her.

As a matter of fact it had come to Herbert, for the first time in his life, to really know the pains and distress of jealousy—that malady, that short madness, that—call it what one will—which comes to harm, sometimes spoil, the lives of so many men ; and often in direct disproportion to their deserts. Conscious objects of ridicule to the unfeeling world, the hearts suffering from it know their own bitterness. They jest, indeed, at scars who never felt a wound ; but it was a wise man, well knowing human nature, who spoke of the attacks “ that gnaw men’s hearts out of their bodies—the pangs that waste men to shadows, and drive them into raving madness or moping melancholy ” ; and of these poor Herbert Somers was to have, in some degree, experimental knowledge. In vain did he reason with himself, seek to persuade himself that he was foolish and sentimental ; in vain did he summon common sense and fortitude to his aid. Underneath it all, he was profoundly miserable ; and, as he reluctantly confessed to himself, the most he could do was to put a brave face on the matter and bear his trouble, as many a better man had done.

At another time he would have had small fault to find with a place between Carrie Westbrook, the prettiest girl in the New York contingent—one of the Autocrat’s “ positive blondes,” with big blue eyes, and hair yellow as gold and soft as silk—and Esther Farley, a gentle maiden from one of the old colonial

towns of Massachusetts, with the same dark eyes and hair that stood out in the Copley portrait in the drawing-room of the ancestral house. Both had greeted him pleasantly as he took his seat, and he succeeded in maintaining—mechanically and with evident preoccupation at first, but more naturally as with a mighty effort he secured control of himself—some conversation with them. Miss Carrie's acquaintance he made at the single ball he attended in New York in the early spring, one of those perfectly ordered affairs at Delmonico's, where private munificence provides fitting surroundings for the gathering of beauty and grace; where marvellous toilets are seen only under the softest and most becoming of tinted lights; where the "swing" of the band's harmonious strains fitly comports with the bouquet of the wines; and the floor and decorations are as fine as the croquettes and the ices. A "bud" of that season, she was an excellent representative of those blessed damosels on whom the great city puts its indelible stamp. Miss Esther, again, whom he had long known, might, as far as face and feature went, have but just disembarked from the *Mayflower*, and yet she was not Puritan at all, but came from good old High Church ancestry; for whose souls, as they reared cross-bearing church-tower amid hostile surroundings, their neighbors had prayed with unction.

Fortunately, both had something to say, and there was a chance that short answers from Herbert would serve his turn. Then, too, Seaton, who

sat opposite, and whose friendly eyes had said "Pull yourself together," as plainly as if he had uttered that favorite adjuration of his, was ready with his aid.

"Do you like Bar Harbor so very, very much, Mr. Somers?" asked the pretty blonde.

"Yes, very much," said Somers. (How he *had* liked it half an hour ago !)

"I thought there was no place to compare with it, and I have been here for years, until I made a visit to Newport."

"Ah, Miss Westbrook," said Seaton, "then your days of pastoral simplicity at Bar Harbor are over; the days of buck-boards and canoeing are gone, never to return. You have eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge."

"And why are they gone, I should like to know?" asked the young lady, with a pretty petulance. "Why can I not love Newport and dear old Bar Harbor, too?"

"Because Newport will have, from a charming young lady, no divided allegiance," replied Seaton. "Once in the net of her fascinations, you struggle in vain to escape, even if you do not remain, as you probably will, a ready captive. I have an idea that Virginia died at the right time for her own peace of mind. After Paris, I fear that the Mauritius, with only Paul for company, would have been a dull place. I presume that your neighbor there, Mr. Browning, will be doing the right thing, and taking a trip around the world soon; and when he comes

back, he can tell you all about the island where St. Pierre laid the scene of his pretty idyl."

Somers, with grateful and appreciative heart, saw that his friend had withdrawn Miss Carrie's attention from him ; for the youth said something about not wishing to leave any place where she was, and she was not at all averse to a mild flirtation. Miss Esther, on the other side of him, said nothing until Seaton had finished. After a while she asked, in her low, gentle voice, of whom they were speaking in the car, who had come to Mount Desert in the seventeenth century ; and he found it comparatively easy to tell her part of the pretty story he had told Seaton ; and he was talking when the move was made to leave the table.

"I expect a friend here ere long, Miss Farley," he said, as he drew the chair back, "who would like nothing better than to talk to you by the hour on this theme."

"I should be glad to meet any friends of yours," said the young girl, "and this particular one is——"

"Mr. Edgar Ramsay."

A slight flush came to her cheek. "I think I used to know him," she said.

CHAPTER V.

The Enemy in Possession.

FROM the table a move was made to the cupola of the hotel for a final view ; and, as the party was grouped on the piazza prior to climbing the stairs, Herbert found himself for a moment by Helen Thurston's side. All was bustle and confusion of tongues about them, Mrs. Renton's incisive tones dominating all others. A cloud obscured the sun ; and, far away at sea, a mist was seen, blotting out point after point in its inexorable advance. A cold gust struck the house, and Helen shivered.

"I have been stupid enough to leave my wraps in the car," said she, turning to Herbert with just enough of a smile to emphasize her dimples, and a pretty, pleading look in the red-brown eyes.

How he blessed that wind ! For a few brief moments the obnoxious Frenchman might have been in Tonquin or Saigon for all he cared for him. Fate was not wholly cruel, after all, and had occasional soft relentings. "I will find them for you," said he, "and, in the meantime," the ulster had lain over his arm, "if you will allow me"—in a moment he was wrapping it round her. She thanked him with a little blush—he had been very close to her, and there was an inevitable suggestion of chivalric ten-

derness in the solicitude with which he had drawn the folds about her, and detached the hood from the collar. Then Mrs. Renton led the way; the count approached, and with a "*Vous permettez ?*" lighted his cigarette; and the ascent was begun.

Ere long, again, the time came for the down trip. As the party took their seats in the car, few failed to feel a little tremor. The grade, which had seemed so steep in the ascent, was far worse now. What was to prevent the little train, thought they, from breaking away from the control of its guardians, rushing, with a speed growing more fearful every second, down the rails, and plunging with its occupants—never to rise again—into that lake lying ready at the foot? Indeed, it *must* do so, if the law of gravity were not at fault. Some of them expressed their fears when, at the same slow pace as in the ascent, the same clutching and gripping at that all-important centre rail, they descended.

The conductor, a capital fellow, who had received them at the stages, steered their steamer across the lake and acted as general factotum, looked up from his brake with a smile which was most reassuring. They were just as safe, he told them, as on any level railroad in the land; safer, indeed, for there were no grade crossings; and yet Herbert Somers, an engineer who knew Western "switch backs" and "mule-shoe curves," and, who, moreover, had carefully examined the admirable safeguards here adopted, was nervous and uncomfortable. No doubt the precautionary arrangements were ample for ordinary mor-

tals—that went without saying ; but—only to think of it !—on this little train, hung, like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth, was Helen Thurston.

“ Now,” said the conductor in his pleasant voice, “ I *have* seen grades where it was a mighty close call for the passengers. Why, when I was braking on the C. P.—Central Pacific, you know—on the mountain division, there came one night that I won't forget in a hurry. I was on the sleeper ‘ City of Sacramento,’ and she was the rear car of the train when we struck the down grade. Just as we started, blame me if some fellow hadn't uncoupled her, and the train went on without her. Then she began to move by herself—real slow, you know ; and the way I run for that hand brake was a caution ; and blamed if it wasn't busted ! Well, I knew there was just one thing to do. I didn't say a word to nobody, but I ran for the wood-box and got a big, knotty chunk, and I got down on the front platform and leaned over—she was going faster every minute—and, when we come to a siding, I just dropped it into the switch and throwed the car off the track. Jim Wood—he was the sleeping-car conductor—he come running to me and says he, ‘ What in thunder did you do that for ?’ He was all broke up—and says I, ‘ It's a darned sight better to be bumped about a little now than smashed into ten thousand small pieces down below there in about five minutes ;’ and all he said was, ‘ You bet.’ ”

Helen Thurston wore the ulster all the way .

home; for, curiously enough, Somers only succeeded in finding her wraps just at the last; and she let him take it off when they reached the hotel, and thanked him with a smile for its use. Then she bade him good-bye, and went to her room.

"Every man his own hotel clerk," said Seaton, coming out from behind the office counter, where he had been rummaging in the pigeon-holes. "Here are a couple of letters for you; and, by the way, I believe they put telegrams in some queer out-of-the-way place here. Yes, by George! here is one for you in that rack."

Does any one ever really acquire the coolness and indifference with which the ideal man should open telegrams? Are there many to the throb of whose pulses the sight of the yellow envelope does not add a beat? Messengers alike of joy and sorrow, of exultation and despair, no sign on their placid, common-place exterior gives hint of what tidings may be borne therein.

Herbert Somers took his despatch, tore off the end of the cover, unfolded the paper and read the message without remark. Then he handed it to Seaton. "Marching orders," said he. It was from the general manager of the railroad with which he was expecting to be connected, offering him an acting appointment, and requesting him to report at once and take his holiday later, as there was bad feeling among the employés, and a strike might occur at any moment. When Seaton had read it, he looked at his friend, and their eyes met.

"Well?" said the older man.

"When does the night boat or train start?" asked Herbert, looking at his watch.

"What time do you make it? Five o'clock? That is a pity," said Seaton, "for the night mail went half an hour ago, and you cannot possibly start before this time to-morrow morning. Never mind, it can't be helped. But, I say, my dear fellow, this is leaving me sadly in the lurch. I don't like to tell you how much I shall miss you. Of course, you must go; I see that, and there is one comfort about your habitually rapid movements. They may bring you back as fast as they take you away." They smoked a few moments before Seaton spoke again.

"There is another consideration," said he, looking straight ahead and not at all at his friend, "as to separation. I am sometimes reminded, apropos of partings, of what a man said to me a long time ago. He had been calling on a married woman whom we all liked very much, and, just as he was taking his leave, she asked if he had seen me that day. On his replying in the negative, she said, pleasantly, that I had not called on her for some time, and he must say to me when we met that I was 'though lost to sight to memory dear.' He was a good-natured, blundering fellow, and never could get a thing straight. I was sitting with quite a party that evening when he came up and blurted out: 'Oh, I've a message for you, Seaton. Mrs. — says, that 'absence makes the heart grow fonder.' " Hello, here comes Shortman, and with his trousers turned up at the bottom.

What is it, Shortman? Raining in London to-day?"

"Chestnut," said Shortman.

"Is it? Well, here is a forfeit in the shape of a better Havana than you can buy in Bar Harbor. How do you like the place, by the way?"

"I agree with Mrs. McKenzie—you know her, I think—from Washington—charming creature, and bright as you like. Says Bar Harbor is like a woman in curl papers; can't tell how she is going to turn out, you know. Wilcox wants to leave; says he wouldn't be found dead here. Too much the correct thing to be muscular, to suit him. Then dined at one of the best houses last night, and they actually had no melon between the oysters and the soup. Quite spoiled his dinner, don't you know."

"Under such circumstances," said Somers, "a speedy departure must be inevitable. Will the count be able to tear himself away?"

"Oh, by Jove! No," said Shortman. "He thinks it no end of a jolly place, and he has invitations from half-a-dozen cottagers to stay with them. Deuced bore to leave him behind, but can't be helped, I suppose. Ta, ta," and he walked away, deftly striking a wax match, and screening it with his hand, as he lighted a cigarette.

"Come with me to that æsthetic little flower store opposite, Herbert," said Seaton, a few moments later. "There is nothing mean about Mrs. Renton. She has asked me to send her some flowers for the hop to-night, and, of course, I must. I made a bad be-

ginning by always doing her behests in time past, and now I am too old to change."

"Another hop to-night?"

"To-night; yes, and every night, Sundays excepted, at one house or the other. And, curiously enough, the people staying in these houses actually dance themselves, which I never saw before at a Northern watering-place. Everywhere else that I have been, the dwellers in the hop-giving houses sat on the piazza at the windows, and saw the outsiders dance."

"That is the Chinese system, isn't it?"

"Yes, that is really so. I shall never forget talking with an old Canton hong merchant, whom the officers of the *Hartford* had invited on board when they were lying in Hong Kong harbor, and gave a dance on Washington's birthday. He said it was *alla same foolo pidgin*—or folly—for people to take all that trouble, when they could afford to hire others to dance for them. Come along, let us look at the flowers before the best are gone. Then, worse luck, I suppose you must be shaking your things together. I shall miss you hugely, and you must come back at the earliest possible moment." They crossed the street, and he picked out a bouquet; then remembered a call to be made, and bade Herbert *au revoir*. The latter, after his friend's departure, walked a short distance toward his rooms, then stopped, retraced his steps, and chose some beautiful roses.

That evening, when he and Seaton went to the

hop, he stopped a moment to call for the flowers. His friend uttered no audible comment, but made an instantaneous mental diagnosis of the situation.

"Of course," said he to himself. "Knows just the right thing to do. Never was anything in better form. Must see if I cannot lend a hand to give him a fair chance." His quick eyes surveyed the scene as they reached the door of the ballroom. "Just as I thought; that confounded count hovering about Helen. The poor child is pale to-night; I believe the fellow has the evil eye. Wonder if I cannot get him away for ten minutes. Like Sidney, I will find a way or make one. Ah! there is my chance. Mrs. Fairfield, just arrived from Boston. Dotes on foreigners, she always told me. Ten to one, she asks me to present the fellow, and she is safe to hold him a quarter of an hour."

Sure enough, it was not long before he was piloting the count across the slippery floor to the chair of the new arrival, who, as he had mentally predicted, was "just dying to know such a distinguished nobleman." Yet another brief period, and Helen Thurston stood with Somers on the piazza, facing the sea. A corner was unoccupied, and thither they walked, her fingers resting lightly on his arm. The moon was shining brightly as before, and, as the young girl lifted her eyes toward the north, she uttered an exclamation of wonder. In the sky, in that direction, was a gorgeous show of flashing, glistening lights, white and pale green; now very faint, then radiating with renewed brightness.

"Oh! what is that?" she asked.

"The *aurora borealis*," said Herbert, "and a splendid exhibition of it, too. Wish that it may mean good fortune to me, Miss Thurston, for I must say good-bye. I am going away early in the morning."

"Going away—and so soon?" exclaimed Helen. Somers was almost sure there was a little regret mingled with the surprise in her tones; and could fancy he saw the color come to her face. Oh! why on earth were there such things as French counts and railroad strikes?

"Unfortunately, yes," he replied. "I am not of the 'leisure class,' and my holidays are rare and precarious. I am a 'horny-handed son of toil,' and my summons has come."

Helen Thurston was a sweet, frank, sensible girl, and perfectly natural; and she really liked Herbert very much. She had entire control of herself, and made no undue show of emotion, but she told the young fellow, in her pretty way, that she was very sorry indeed. They talked a few moments and watched the splendid celestial pyrotechnics. Then Herbert saw Seaton not far away, and he knew the time had come for him to go. He took the bouquet from a chair where he had placed it, and gave it to the young girl.

"I have brought you a few flowers," said he, in his simple, manly fashion. "I hope you will keep a little corner in your memory for me. Good-night and good-bye."

He shook her hand warmly, and was gone just as Seaton, with ready tact, stepped quickly to take his place by her side ; and thus it was the older man whom the count, searching with a vicious look in his small eyes, found talking with her when he came upon the piazza, and that same older man's roses which he supposed he saw her holding in her hand.

Two days later Seaton was one of a party made up to go to Somesville for supper. As all frequenters of Mount Desert know, and as all students of the geography of this country should know, the island is nearly bisected by this splendid sound or inland sea. The beautiful sheet of water, a miniature copy of that noble one in our north-west territory bearing the name of Puget, is open to the ocean at its southernmost end, but this entrance is guarded by a rampart of islands. Seven miles north it stretches, thus fitted to afford a secure and commodious harbor for the navies of the world. The cliffs which overhang it are most impressive, and in some cases rise perpendicular from its placid waters. At its upper end, resting on the shore of an inner harbor, is the hamlet of Somesville, named for Abraham Somes, who came thither from Gloucester, Massachusetts, in 1760, and was the first of the Anglo-Saxon race to establish himself permanently on the island. Here, at this quiet hamlet, is no stir of trading or manufacturing, no hum of busy wheels, no clank of hammer on anvil. The village seems buried in a Rip Van Winkle sleep for nine months in the year; and only in the bright summer do the crowds of gay

tourists, buckboard-borne, invade its quiet precincts. It is to Bar Harbor as is the Cliff House to San Francisco, or Taft's Point Shirley Hotel to Boston ; a place where viands, at least relatively toothsome, will afford a change from an every-day cuisine.

In two large buck-boards, each holding twelve besides the driver, was the party stowed ; and, with continuous sound of song and laughter, did the young people journey up and down hill, until the little hostelry was reached, and they descended from their seats, dusty but happy. Then came a nondescript meal, of which broiled chicken and "pop-overs" (a kind of muffin) formed the principal constituents. Just before it was announced, Seaton was standing on the side piazza of the inn, near the corner, and he overheard part of a conversation between Helen Thurston and the Count de Meaubré, who were at the front and just out of sight. Helen had been saying that the count probably knew of the early occupation of the island by his countrymen.

"Ah ! and how knew you of that ?" asked he.

"Mr. Somers told me," was the reply.

"Ha !" said the Frenchman. "You like him ; you trust him ? He is unworthy ; he is——"

Before he had time to say another word, Seaton passed round the corner and confronted the pair. Helen's lips were parted as if to speak, and the Frenchman's hand was raised as in gesticulation, but he did not speak. Seaton, with easy assurance, and as if he had heard nothing, was about to

address the young girl, when some of her companions came to call her to supper, and she pleasantly excused herself and went to join them. The count was going to follow, when Seaton touched him on the arm.

"I wish to speak to you," said he. "Just now I overheard you mention the name of my friend, Mr. Somers, in an unpleasant manner. You did not finish your sentence. Suppose you do so now."

"It is not of your affair," said the count, twisting his moustache.

"It *is* my affair, for I make it so," said Seaton. He stepped closer, his voice took on a sort of metallic ring, and there came a look in his eyes which was remembered by a good many people: the men in his old battery, the party of "hoodlums" in San Francisco, from whom he rescued the Chinaman they were tormenting, the wretches who tried to force themselves into the boats before the women and children, in the steamboat disaster.

"Understand distinctly," said he, "that if I hear of your daring to say one disagreeable word about my friend, I will thrash you within an inch of your life. Now, get out of my way!" and he pushed the count aside, and passed on, leaving him with a most unpleasant expression on his face, and a glitter in his eyes.

"It is *guerre à l'outrance* between us now, and no mistake," said Seaton to himself, "but I think I can take care of him."

Supper over, the party again gathered on the

piazza. The moon was obscured at times, and the light fitful and uncanny. Some one suggested that it was just the hour for the telling of ghost stories; and, this idea finding general favor, it was insisted that Seaton should lead off.

"I do not see why you select me," said he, "but I have lived in countries where it was the habit of all to try to amuse each other, and I will do my best. Mine is hardly a ghost story, only a narrative of what once actually happened.

"I was, some time ago, at one of the coast ports of China, and desiring to journey thence homeward, over a long and somewhat perilous route. I mean that by Siberia to European Russia. I wanted a companion, and several were to be had for the asking; but they did not suit me. My feelings were somewhat like those of a brother alumnus of Harvard—a very enthusiastic one—whom I know and admire much. At one time we attended the same church, the clergy of which he did not greatly affect. Once I asked him for which of them he would send, were he on his death bed, or in great affliction; and he answered quickly: 'Great Scott! I wouldn't send for any of them. I would send for a Harvard man!' By good fortune, such a one, a Harvard man, arrived at the port at that time; I suggested his accompanying me, and, to my great satisfaction, he assented. I think of him now just as he was then; one of the best men I have ever known; strong and gentle, brave and tender, clever—Ah! I must not sing his virtues more,

“ ‘Lest, praising him, I should myself commend,
So high in merit he, and I so very dear a friend.’

“ We made thorough and careful preparations for our journey, and, when at last they were concluded, we took a steamer which conveyed us up the China coast, across the stormy Gulf of Pechili, and by the tortuous course of the Peiho River to Tientsin, the city where you may remember the terrible massacre of the French Sisters of Charity took place in 1870. Here we made further preparations; and, one beautiful morning, we began the long and adventurous trip to the northern border of China. As we entered upon the plain, I well remember, a sand storm was raging far to the westward, and we could see the clouds whirling on the horizon. We were very thoroughly equipped, but the transit was hard and toilsome, and we made anything but rapid progress. Our route led to that marvellous work, the Great Wall; then across the Sandy Desert of Gob or Shamo, and both Inner and Outer Mongolia, to the Siberian frontier, at that curious place where the China border town of Maimachin faces the Russian border town of Kiachta, with the *zona libre*, or neutral ground, lying between. It is as if Asia were looking scowlingly at Europe, and the Mongolian frowning at the Caucasian. Not far distant from Kiachta are Lake Baikal, Irkoutsk and the great trans-Siberian post road.

“ We journeyed steadily from day to day, and all promised well for us. Day by day, too, I was more thankful that I had such a companion. His so-

ciety was enlivening; his spirits never flagged, his courage never failed. Now, with the keen eye of an artist, he was pointing out the grand cloud-effects of the desert; again, he was urging on the pack animals, and good-naturedly scolding them; anon he was talking cheeringly of subjects utterly remote from all around us; say of the art galleries of Europe, or the society of Newport. He was apparently at his very best, mentally and physically; and in the flush of vigorous health and strength.

“We were not many days’ march from Urga, the principal town on the way, when I noticed a change in him. He said less, and, when he did talk, it began to be of home, and well-remembered scenes of long ago. He grew pale, seemed to care little for his food, fell behind in the march, and was at last constrained to ask for a halt. I was greatly troubled and alarmed; for I had heard of the maladies of those regions—something in the nature of fevers, but speedy and destructive—which smite down strong men unawares. I gave him all the care in my power, and tried the effect of some remedies we had with us. He made no complaint and preserved a semblance of cheerfulness; and, late in the afternoon of the day after that on which we halted, and just before he asked to be left alone in the hope of sleeping, he had been talking of old college days. I was making a forlorn and lonely supper, when our chief guide came to me.

“‘Master,’ said he, softly, ‘the other master is very ill.’

“‘Do you think so?’ I asked, with a chill premonition of evil.

“‘I do not think it; I know it,’ he replied. ‘The master will soon die.’

“Thereupon a great grief seized upon me. It seemed unbearable that my dear friend must die there in the wilderness; must pass away in the flower of his age. Oh! it was *too* hard. I paced the ground about the camp, in great mental distress, for a long time; then I approached my friend, who lay quite still on his rude pallet. I sat by him for hours, and I shall never forget that strange vigil. The great dome of heaven was overhead, solemn, cloudless, and starlit, and now and then a meteor shot across it. The air was cool and crisp, and a perfect stillness prevailed. My nerves were at their highest tension, and at such times one thinks strange thoughts. No experience like this had ever come to me, and I knew not what was to happen. At last, I saw my friend move; then he turned his head toward me. I saw that he was awake, and I bent over him, and took his hand in mine. Then he spoke, in a low tone, but apparently without effort, and as clearly and distinctly as possible. I remember every word he said, as if it were yesterday.

“‘I knew I should find you by me, old fellow,’ he began, ‘when I came back. Of course, you do not understand what I mean, but I will tell you. I know as well as you that I am lying here in the great Mongolian Desert, and that I am going to

leave you. I know you will miss me, and it grieves me to part with you, but life has not been so attractive that I shall go out of it with great regret. God has always been good to me, and to-night He has granted me a great boon. You know how I loved our old college; and, after I had been talking to you to-night, it seemed to me that I *must* see it once more before I died. Percy, old man, *I have been there!* I care not to know how, nor do I deny that my body, or what was my body, has been lying here; but *I* have been far away—not dreaming, not in a trance—but, in some shape or other, in the old college grounds, unchanged since I last saw them; the buildings, the grass, the walks, all the same. I passed round them—I have bidden them farewell—and I have come back. In all my life, my mind was never clearer nor my faculties brighter than at this moment. I have told you the simple truth, and told you it with a grateful heart.’

“Of what more he said to me, in those solemn night-watches, I may not speak. He passed away in that dread time, between midnight and dawn, when so many lay down the burden of life. It was of his strange journey, in what the Theosophists call his ‘astral shape,’ that I wished to tell you, not of his ending. We buried him under the sand next day, and I often think of that lonely grave in the great Desert of Mongolia, of the mighty celestial dome overhanging it at night, and the storms which rage round and about it. I suppose they have long since torn away the rude board we placed

at its head To the usual inscriptions, and a text of Scripture, I could not help adding a Latin line—a familiar one, from Virgil; you young college fellows know it, and can translate it for the rest. It was,

“‘*Et dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos.*’”

CHAPTER VI.

Some Letters and Telegrams.

I.

BOSTON, *July* —, 188—.
9.30 A.M.

MY DEAR SEATON:

Look at the date and ask why tarry I here. Why, indeed? I will tell you. I rose with the lark yesterday, and from the stern of the steamer watched the lights and shadows on the Desert Mountains all the way to the ferry. Then I entered a car and rode at a slow and dignified pace to Bangor, where I breakfasted in the station. Then I again settled myself in my seat, and hoped the train would make good progress, and land me in Boston at 4.45 P.M., as per time-table. I trusted the conductor would be of the same kind as one I met on a Western road not long ago. We were going at a tremendous pace, so that it was hard for us to keep our seats. I saw a man stop this conductor to speak to him, and noticed that the latter was quite vehement, and gesticulated in replying. Later on, when in conversation with him, I asked who it was that spoke to him.

"He? why he's the assistant superintendent," replied my new acquaintance, with a chuckle. "You ought to have heard what I told him. You see,

we're a little late, and Jim—he's the engineer—wanted to pick up, and he opened her out, and she was just humming. The superintendent, there, he got scared, and he asked if we were'nt a'going a little too fast; and I just said to him: 'You made the time-table, and it's my business to make the time, and you can bet your sweet life I'm a'going to.''' You will see that I reckoned without my host. In another hour we came to a standstill; and, leaving my seat for a reconnoissance, I saw a freight and cattle train piled promiscuously on the single track ahead of us, and in a cutting with steep sides. What was to be done? I tried to ascertain where we were, wishing all the time that I were back at Bar Harbor. Alongside of us ran a river, crossed by a bridge or a series of bridges, and beyond lay a town—so near and yet so far! when one has to carry a heavy valise, a hat-box, and a roll of rugs and sticks. I learned that across the river there was a station on a branch railway, with a clear track to the junction and Boston; so was not surprised to be requested to walk thither. As I was starting I saw a very pretty young girl standing disconsolate and looking like Evangeline banished from Acadia. She, too, was overladen with heavy bags and the like, and in her blue eyes was a mute appeal to my chivalry. Of course, I added part of her load to mine—what else could I do?—and we began our tramp in company. They called it half a mile, but, judging by my tired muscles, it was three times that. All things, however, come to an end, and we finally

brought up at a station platform—several car-loads of hot, tired, disgusted, indignant passengers. I gave my pretty companion a seat on my valise, and went in search of information as to our movements; supposing, of course, that they would be very simple, and only involve a little delay; and this delay I grudged sorely enough. Naturally, there must be a heavy train that day bound toward Bar Harbor, just as we were bound from it; and what more suitable than for us travellers to exchange cars by a detour around the break? Conceive, then, of my surprise and wrath when an aged station agent showed me a telegram from headquarters saying positively that the company would not transfer us, and we must all walk back to the train. Like the weak, long-suffering creatures we Americans are, under such circumstances, the poor passengers began the return journey; but I conceived a better idea than that. I chartered an ice-cart and invited my young lady and some others to share its accommodations; and, amid the jeers of the rude local populace, we were conveyed to the place we had lately left. Here (just to think of it!) we were detained until *midnight*, while the officials slowly and deliberately cleared the track in front of us. I myself had not a morsel to eat for about twelve hours; but my solicitude in this regard was for the poor women and children, and especially for my young lady charge, for such, by what you call *force majeure*, she had become. Curiously enough, on the wrecked train were some prize cattle, on their

way home from a fair at Bangor; and a good Samaritan in charge milked a valuable cow and gave me the contents of a tin dipper for the girl; and on this, with two apples handed her by an aged stranger with a gray beard, she was compelled to subsist. Poor little thing! she was uncommonly forlorn.

At last we started, and the hours of the night dragged through in some way or another; and here I am, tired and cross. At the Eastern Station, my dainty charge was received and strenuously embraced by a stalwart fellow, whom she blushing presented to me as a Captain B——, —d Artillery; to whom she, it seems, is engaged. She must have made much to him of the little I did for her, for he wrung my hand and, as the Spaniards say, placed himself at my feet. I learned from him that serious trouble is feared on the line of our road, and that he is expecting to be ordered thither with the United States troops. This makes me all the more anxious to get off, and to my post; and yet this miserable one-horse railroad company has detained me, or will have detained me, nearly twenty-four hours.

I shall write you again, as soon as I can. Remember me most kindly to friends in Bar Harbor. There is one good thing about all this excitement and these inexorable claims on me; they keep my mind from dwelling too much on the happenings of the last few days. So write me how you are, and how matters are progressing.

Ever yours,

H. S.

II.

BAR HARBOR, *July —, 188—.*

DEAR HERBERT :

I need not say how glad I was to hear from you, and of your adventures ; and I shall look for further instalments thereof.

Nor need I say how much I miss you. The rooms seem as lonely as possible ; and your place at table has been taken by a youth who habitually poses as muscular, and not only comes to meals in flannels of dubious tinge, but even dispenses with a coat. I suppose he is so enamored of tennis that he grudges the time required for the doffing, after eating, of that conventionally needful garment.

The weather has been splendid, and the place at its best. The air has something of the "champagne" character of that of the Rocky Mountains—the curious quality which suggests a hop, skip and jump when you first breathe it in the morning.

The gay life of the summer visitors goes on about as usual. Just now, canoeing is the particular craze ; why, I cannot begin to understand. I contend that a good lap-streak boat is as superior to a canoe as the modern house is to the wigwam. People talk about going back to the dwellings and conveyances of the good old times, and affect camping out, and rude living and canoeing as primitive and delightful ; forgetting that they of former times could not do any better ; that it was Hobson's choice with them. As for me, I consider civilization very satisfactory ; and not only do I find the row-

boat very much to my taste, but I also contribute materially, through its possession, to the preservation of human life. You see, canoeing is an exact science, and youths and maidens will not take this into account; hence, very much capsizing and general coming to grief. I myself have picked up two couples since you went away; and, if it be fun to be submerged in water as cold as is the sea at Bar Harbor, I fail to see it. I am thinking of establishing a branch of the Humane Society, and also of keeping a doctor and clergyman always in attendance at the wharf. Some English professor or other was to have come hither yesterday, and his expectant hostess invited the canoe club to parade in his honor, and gracefully paddle by her cottage. I happened to know that, on arriving in New York, he had expressed great surprise at finding window curtains in the houses, and he asked a friend of mine, in all seriousness, if we "still had trial by jury in America"; so I told the girls he would inevitably take them for squaws, and expect to be scalped. The joke is that the parade was on time, but the professor was not. I am sure he thought discretion the better part of valor. By the same token, I had something else to say in connection with the parades. That confounded French fellow had the audacity to join the club, and, what is more, to ask Helen Thurston to accompany him on this occasion. I do not like to meddle, but this was a little *too* much, and I went to mamma and told her how foolhardy such a thing would be; and I am

glad to say I carried my point. I have an idea that, in her inmost heart, pretty Helen thanked me; but she did not say so, all the same. I would like to know why she allows that fellow to hang about her. A beautiful young woman's likes and dislikes are far too subtle a study for me, but I cannot escape the conviction that, in this case, there is something under the surface which we cannot understand; some uncanny influence that he exercises over her. Well, perhaps something will occur to break it up; let us hope so. She is, I think, prettier and more charming than ever. I read her your letter, and thought she was particularly interested in your account of the beautiful young girl to whom you played knight-errant. What an experience you had, to be sure! I know several officers of the —d Artillery, and the colonel is a grand old fellow. I served under him when he commanded sixteen thousand men; and, in any other country in the world, he could not be a regimental officer after that. He is a first-class man for a riot (and you will have one, if I read the signs of the times correctly). He commanded in New York city after those of 1863, and a fellow who had been a leader in them, and whom he knew through his military detectives, came to his headquarters one day, I presume to sound him. The general answered his questions mildly at first; but at last broke out, and told him that if he and his friends rose again, he would blow them to —; that he could not serve his God and his country so well; and he would rather do it than defeat the Army of

Northern Virginia. He meant it, too; as any future rioters will find out, with whom he has to deal. Take good care of yourself. I know you will do your duty, and wish I were to be with you.

While on belligerent subjects, I believe I have not told you that the (so-called) noble count and I had a little difference at Somesville the other day. I overheard a remark from him which I did not like, and I quietly intimated to him that he had better not repeat such a performance; that was all.

Young Browning, the Cræsus of Bar Harbor, is continually at Carrie Westbrook's side (except when he is opposite to her in a canoe). Unless one or both are drowned, I imagine they will hit it off together. That other nice girl, Esther Farley, does not seem to care for any of the juvenile cavaliers, although there are several 'Barkises' who are apparently willing. I think she has a secret sorrow; also, from some remarks she has dropped, that she is bitten by that craze about the French occupation of old times. What on earth made you start that matter? It is worse than the "horse-car poetry"; and one who has it on his mind is bound to unload it on some one else's. Even I cannot overcome my curiosity about it; and, when war's alarms are past, and you have gained *placidam sub libertate quietem*, you must come back and explode the whole delusion.

Until then, I ought to spare you such long yarns as this. Write soon, and believe me,

Thine,

PERCIVAL SEATON.

III.

BAR HARBOR, *July* —, 188—.

DEAREST FANNY :

I should have written to you long ago, but one has so much to do in a place like this that time passes like a flash.

Do you remember the delightful visit we made to Trouville? It was all so novel and amusing that I have never forgotten a single occurrence, nor a single person there. You will recall Edgar Ramsay, of whom we saw so much, and whom you liked so well. I had several letters from him after we parted, and he always spoke of you. Now I hear that he is coming home and to Bar Harbor. It would be very pleasant to meet him again, and especially here, for I learn that he has found some wonderful old chronicles about the early French occupation of this island, and has some curious theory about a lost ring which it might be possible to find, after nearly three hundred years. Just think how interesting all this would be to hear from his own lips! There has been a great friend of his at this place recently, Mr. Herbert Somers, whom I liked very much. He was quite attentive to Helen Thurston (I do not think her so *very* pretty), but he was called suddenly away. . . .

Please write me if you hear anything of Mr. Ramsay's movements.

Yours sincerely,

ESTHER.

TO MISS FANNY ASHBURTON,
Nahant, Mass.

IV.

BAR HARBOR, *Friday*.

DEAR HERBERT:

After I had signed my name to my last letter, I thought of something else to tell you, but I have a constitutional objection to postscripts.

Miss Helen came to me yesterday and, after beating about the bush a bit, asked if I thought there was any danger about the service in which you are engaged.

Thine,

P. S.

V.

DEAR ESTHER:

. . . Your allusions to Mr. Ramsay are what my brother calls "immense." Why, my dear, he never cared two straws for me ; indeed, never had an eye for me when you were near. . . .

Yours,

FANNY.

VI.

NEW YORK, *August* —, 188—.

DEAR SEATON:

I was delighted to receive your two letters, and I have been detained so long that they reached me here. Now, however, I am nearly ready, and I hope to be off for the West in a few hours, so must defer writing you at length.

Your letters interested me very much, and I thank you for them. They quite took my thoughts, for

the time being, off the important matters on which they have been concentrated. I could write books on the topics suggested by these pleasant epistles, but it must not be at present.

I have just received a letter from Ramsay, a long and very interesting one, too. He said he should follow it himself in ten days, but it has been such a time hunting me that he must, if he carried out his purpose, be now near at hand. Good-by, old man.

Ever yours,

H. S.

P. S.—Please give my kindest regards to Miss Helen, and tell her, with many thanks for her friendly interest, that I am taking good care of myself.

That French fellow is not worth the powder and ball it would take to shoot him. . . .

VII.

NO. — RUE DU FAUBOURG ST. HONORÉ,

PARIS, *July* —, 188—.

MY DEAR HERBERT :

You cannot tell how necessary you became to me in Paris ; and it has never seemed the same place since you went away. You know I do not care for many people, and do not form friendships easily ; but you were a brother to me ; and then you seemed to understand me, and entered into my feelings, and did not laugh at what other people call my "hobbies" and "crazes." For some time I have been

so lonesome here that I would have gone to America but for the quest on which I was engaged, and which I could not bear to abandon. I know you will share my delight at the success which has crowned my efforts. Just think of it! I have really found what I was seeking, and my first impulse, when I held it in my hand, was to write and tell you the good news. My second was to engage my passage, which I have done in the French steamer to sail from Havre in ten days' time. I am all impatience to see you; meantime must let you know what has happened.

In the first place, I think I have established beyond a question the authenticity of that chronicle from the pen of the gallant La Roche Guyon, of the expedition to Acadie under La Saussaye. Not only do the best experts in Paris pronounce it genuine, but I have had the good fortune to find contemporary reference to it. There can no longer be any doubt that it is as true and faithful an account of what transpired on the voyage and at Saint Sauveur as anything in the *Relations des Jésuites*; and, unlike these latter, it suppresses nothing. I have pored over it until I know it by heart. What a story it is of heroism, and devotion, and self-sacrifice! As to the tinge of the supernatural perceptible in it, I see nothing impossible, nor really improbable, in the occurrences narrated, and think that one physically and mentally constituted as am I, who has once and again neared the confines of the other world, has an insight denied to those in

rude health and absorbed in active affairs. I could speak to you as Hamlet to Horatio, and tell you of things of which you do not dream. Rather, however, would I make conviction doubly sure by proof. I believe, as surely as I believe in mathematical axioms or in the evidence of my senses, that the Crusader's ring, which Madame de Guercheville gave Du Thet, lies hidden near one of the springs on the site of St. Sauveur. I believe that it can be found, and something tells me that it will be with your aid, my dear Herbert. I believe, moreover, that it will assuredly bring good fortune to its worthy wearer, and—but I have said enough on this point. My pen runs away with me when I am on such themes.

I know well that I am not long for this world, but I feel that I shall live to make my words good; and, now that I have the needed information, I must lose no time, for "the night cometh, when no man can work."

Again, in the library of one of the great religious houses here, I have found a memoir of Du Thet, which has fascinated me. I know not why it is, but I feel singularly drawn toward him, and seem to enter into his feelings and struggles and hopes. One need not be a priest nor a Roman Catholic to do that, and I think his one of the best and noblest characters of which I have ever known. I can quite understand his earnest desire to labor to the end of his days in distant lands, and die at his post. There is something inspiring about a life like that,

given for the good of fellow-men, and it must really be a far happier one than any other. I have an idea, too, that the lay brother was, like myself, convinced that he had not long to live, and that his thoughts dwelt habitually on the other world ; in fact, absurd as it may seem, I find that I am putting myself in his place, and imagining how I would have acted. What a grand, romantic, and absorbing idea it was to find Norumbega, and perchance the lost tribes of the people of God dwelling therein ! Positively, I believe I will go myself and look for some faint trace of the fabled city, or, at least, place it, in my fancy, on some suitable site which I may find on the shores of the Penobscot. And, all this time, I have not told you of my last and greatest discovery. I was so impressed by the allusions in the narrative of Captain de la Roche Guyon to the monograph by one of Mme. de Guercheville's family, on the celebrated ring, that I must needs spare no pains to find it. I had a wearisome and, for a long while, a fruitless search, and I was in the habit of consulting almost daily with some of those old keepers of book stalls, whom you remember so well, on the embankment of the Seine. My particular " guide, philosopher and friend," was an old fellow on the Quai Voltaire, whose whole stock in trade is contained in a box or tray, placed on the stone parapet, but who knows much about ancient books. I made it well worth his while to search, and promised him a royal reward in case of success ; and at last he did succeed ! I do not quite know where or how he

found it, but my impression is that he was put upon the track of some rare books included in the sale, years ago, of the library of a famous collector. At all events, I have it in my possession, this wonderful little book. It gives a complete history of the ring, of the original finding of the stone, and the collection of writings and traditions in regard to its having been in a sacred place; then the genesis of the ring itself and its history through age after age. Of course, a sceptic may laugh at it all as fictitious; but, for the life of me, I cannot see why it should not be true. At all events, it is most interesting; all that Madame de Guercheville told Du Thet about it is fully confirmed, and there are some charming stories of fair women and brave men in connection with its history.

Now, my dear Herbert, my mind is quite made up; I have determined what I will do, and I want you to aid me. I am going to America, and to Mount Desert, and I mean to find the site of St. Sauveur, and search diligently for the ring.

You may call me as foolish and Quixotic as you like (although I do not believe you will, you dear old fellow), but something, as I say, tells me I shall succeed. Then I shall travel, supposing my strength to last, in those regions around which must hover something of the atmosphere of the romantic past, when brave and holy men from beyond seas dared danger and death, and spent labor and life, in the cause of civilization and Christianity. I sometimes wish I myself had lived in those days, when they

seem to have made more of life than they do now. With but a few years left to me, I would like to use them for good, and I do not care for the conventional channels. I would gladly lead some forlorn hope, so to speak, and die at my post.

But enough of my vagaries; when I write to you, as you know, I am apt to open my heart. I will not ask you to write me here, as the letter would probably cross me on the ocean; but please have a line to meet me at my club, and say where I shall find you. I am in great spirits at the idea of seeing you, and going about my quest; and I laugh at my ailments for the time being. My soul is strong, and it lifts the weak body to its work. Good-bye, my dear fellow.

Very sincerely yours,
EDGAR RAMSAY.

VIII.

"BOOMS FROM BAR HARBOR."

No. V.

(Special Correspondence of the *Universe*).

BAR HARBOR, *July* —, 188—.

The past week has been one of unexampled gayety, and the season is now at its height. . . . The yachts are arriving daily, and the harbor presents a gay scene. On Saturday last came in the *Constellation*, N. Y. Y. C., belonging to Mr. Wilcox, a gentleman of large wealth and fine social position,

as well as an accomplished yachtsman. On board with him were his Excellency Count de Meaubré, a distinguished French nobleman, and Mr. Shortman, a prominent member of the leading New York clubs. The count is a scion of one of the oldest and most aristocratic families in *La Belle France*, and has held high diplomatic positions under both the Empire and the Republic. Your correspondent sought an early interview with him, and was received with a mingled dignity and courtesy wholly characteristic of the *ancien régime*. Being asked his opinion of American institutions, he replied that it was very favorable, and, he added, that there were many features of our government which he would like to see introduced into France; also some of our social customs, especially the freedom accorded young girls, which he found most agreeable. In view of the fact that the count seems a prime favorite with the fair sex here, your correspondent found this opinion quite natural on his part. . . . A charming entertainment was given on Monday evening by Mrs. Z——, at her beautiful house. Among those present were . . . Miss Thurston, the Count de Meaubré, Miss Westbrook, Mr. Brown-ing, etc. . . . The Count de Meaubré gave an elegant supper to some of the *crème de la crème* of Bar Harbor last evening, including . . . Miss Thurston, Mrs. Renton . . . and several others. . . . At the — Hotel hop on Wednesday evening, there was a German, led by the Count de Meaubré with Miss Thurston. . . .

IX.

(Enclosed in above, marked "Personal," and addressed to a member of the staff.)

DEAR SAM :

This is a daisy billet, and I am glad enough that it fell to me. A comfortable room and three square meals a day (a few words about "gentlemanly proprietor," "liberal policy," etc., go a great way, you know) are no small matter, but I am doing the great society act, too. You see there are lots of pretty girls here, and not enough men to go round, so yours truly is on deck, and taking care of his end of the schooner. You ought to see me canoeing, and "rocking" (as they call walking on the rocks with one's best girl). It lays way over night detail in New York in winter.

You will see that I have given a French count a send-off in to-day's letter. I got a hint to do it, which I didn't dare disregard, from a chap in the yacht with him, who is a shareholder in the paper and thick as hops with the old man. Between you and me, Sam, I don't take much stock in the Frenchman. He won't look you square in the face ; and, although I'm not much on knowing the nobility, he doesn't seem to me altogether like the real thing. I can't get over the idea, too, that I've seen him somewhere before, and I shall cudgel my brains until I remember where and when it was. What hurts me most was to have to couple a young girl's name with his. The chap on the yacht told me to do it, and that she would like it. *I don't believe a*

word of this, and I would not have done it but to save my bread and butter. She is the nicest girl I ever saw, and has been just as polite to me as if I were a howling swell, and worth a million. Well, such is life. Do you know that I wouldn't be surprised if something happened pretty soon in connection with these people; and right on the lookout here, and ready to catch on to anything that may turn up, will be

Your friend, BOB.

P. S.—I am paralyzing them with my French quotations.

X.

Telegram.

NEW YORK, *August —, 188—.*

ROBERT C.,

Special Correspondent *Universe*,
Bar Harbor, Me.

Make careful investigation regarding supposed French count mentioned in last letter. Keep strictly private and report to office.

J. S., *Managing Editor.*

XI.

Telegram.

BAR HARBOR, ME., *August —, 188—.*

MANAGING EDITOR *Universe*,

N. Y.

Telegram received, O. K.

R. C.

XII.

Telegram.

PHILA., *August —*, 188—.

PERCIVAL SEATON,

Bar Harbor, Me.

French steamer telegraphed. If Ramsay goes
Mt. Desert please care for him. Lively times ahead,
all well.

H. SOMERS.

CHAPTER VII.

Stirring Times.

THE great railroad's necessity was Herbert Somers' opportunity. Its managers knew him to have had remarkable influence with the employes on the roads where he had previously been an official; and his reputation in that regard had, indeed, spread far and wide. Now he, or some one who could deal with men as he had in time past, was sorely needed. But a short time before, this great organization, with all its complex elements, its far-reaching ramifications, its important functions, had been in perfect working order. Day after day, hour after hour, its trains had started from either end and run to their destination with exceptional regularity and freedom from accident. So enviable a reputation had it gained for careful management that it easily led all its rivals in popularity, and its directors and shareholders were serenely comfortable. Moreover, its executive had taken unusual measures for the good of its vast army of workmen, of all kinds and grades. They had premiums for excellence in their departments, full compensation for labor out of regular hours, provision for disablement and illness. Not only

had they seemed, but had often declared themselves to be, well content.

All of a sudden, and without the slightest warning, this prosperous condition of affairs was rudely disturbed. Upon quite another road, hundreds of miles away, a single man had been discharged for alleged incompetence and insubordination; whereupon his fellows at once stopped work and deserted their posts. Hardly had intelligence of this movement reached the directors of the greater corporation, when they found trouble at their own doors. Some secret organization of workmen had been pleased to suppose a community of interest between the two roads; and they determined to attack the one where no grievance was even claimed to exist. Veiled, as to their origin, in a certain mystery, but speedy and inexorable, the orders went forth. Nearly all the men on the greater road "struck." The freight, much of it perishable, and scattered, part in the cars, part on the platform, part in the waiting wagons, was abandoned; the passengers came to stations, only to find their trains hopelessly off time, or missing altogether; even the United States mails failed to reach their destination.

It was when affairs had arrived at this pass that Herbert Somers appeared on the scene. His summons had originally come from the distant road, but he had been transferred to the nearer one at the commencement of the troubles. As he arrived at headquarters, he could but think of the strange and curious change which had come over

his surroundings. But a little time before, he had been lotus-eating, as it now seemed to him ; he had been revelling in the charms of air and sky ; had been admiring, with the zest of one long separated from such things, the display of youth and beauty ; had been, like a true knight, paying his devotions to one fair maiden—ah ! he could not think about it. Here were the sound of the trumpet, the “ noise of the captains and the shouting ; ” here was man’s work before him, hard, responsible, absorbing ; here was the field where soon must come the shock of forces. Here was no place for squires of dames, but only for knights with visor down and lance in rest.

In this spirit did he meet the officials, and receive his instructions ; then out upon the road he went. His reputation had preceded him ; most of the men gave him a fair reception ; many talked with him gladly ; some, with firm trust in his honor and discretion, told him, with tears in their eyes, that they acted under duress, and dared not refrain from joining in the strike. Even at this early stage had they begun to feel the pinch of distress ; their wives and children were on scant allowance of food ; they had the greatest apprehension for the future—but the *Camorra* had decreed ; the fiat had gone forth ; and, for better or worse, the die was cast for them. Everywhere it was the same ; the men were not unwilling to listen to argument, and often made no attempt to refute it, but all discussion ended as it had begun—hopelessly. It seemed to Somers like a

sort of Reign of Terror. Moreover, there had flocked to the spot from all quarters the privates of the great army of the discontented, the Anarchists, the vicious idlers, the scum of great cities; worse even, the rogues and thieves, who gather, as the eagles round the carcass, at such times.

Herbert Somers made his tour without loss of time, and wrote a hurried report. When the president of the road had read it, he called his directors together and communicated the contents to them. Then to this meeting, at which Somers was present by request, was admitted a deputation of the strikers, who were invited to state their grievances and their claims. There was nothing new in them; the men admitted that, for themselves, they had little or nothing of which to complain; but, with monotonous iteration, dwelt on the determination of their leaders to make common cause with their brethren on other roads.

The president heard them patiently to the end; then he rose to his feet, at the head of the long table around which sat his Board.

"My friends," said he, addressing the deputation, "I have heard all you say, and the time for talk has come to an end. I have done my best by you and for you, and now I will meet the issue you make. As long as I am president of this road I will spare no pains to protect the interests of the stockholders. I propose to find out now, and once for all, if they have rights, and if society can protect these rights. With the best wishes for all of you

personally, I pronounce this interview at an end, and wish you good-morning."

"Mr. Somers," continued he, "when I was last in the West, I heard much of a quality called *sand*. It has more names than that, and, whatever it may be called, I think you possess it. I offer you a post of great responsibility, not unattended with danger. Will you go to the Western end of this road and assume charge there? At that point we shall have, I think, our earliest and our worst trouble, but we shall support you to the best of our power, and you must open the road as soon as you can, and, in the meantime, do your best to protect its property."

Herbert saw the eyes of the members of the Board fixed on him, some with curiosity, others with a certain solicitude. They all sat still and silent—these representatives of the great god capital—these opulent gentlemen in double-breasted frock coats, and gray hair. He rose from his seat and said:

"I will go with pleasure, Mr. President." There were signs of relief on the countenances of the directors, and some of them requested the pleasure of shaking hands with him. In two hours' time he was on his way westward, on one of the irregular and infrequent trains. He saw at a glance that some of his fellow-passengers were of a dangerous class and bound on no good errand; and men of this kind entered at several way-stations. At last there came two of particularly objectionable appearance, and what are happily called "toughs." Casting their eyes about them, they saw an elderly man in a

seat, and next the window; and, although there were plenty of vacant places, they viciously resolved to oust him.

"Come out of that seat, old man," said one of them, in his sullen voice. "We want it." The old man looked about him as if seeking help; but he kept his place.

"Come out o' that!" ejaculated the ruffian, with a growl like that of a bull-dog. "Oh! yer won't, won't yer? Then I'm a' goin' to knock yer out."

Any one who had known Herbert Somers, and had watched him while the "tough" was speaking, would have seen his lips compress themselves closer than usual, and a little gleam come in his eyes. At the last words, he rose suddenly, threw off his loose sack coat, stepped close to the burly fellow who had spoken, and stood facing him.

"Your noise disturbs the passengers," said he. "It is disagreeable and must be stopped. Besides, I heard you speak of 'knocking out' some one. It will not be that elderly gentleman there. Try me, you miserable bully!"

Nothing is more commonly and wrongly overrated than mere size and brute, undisciplined strength. The big fellow towered an inch above Herbert, tall as the latter was; and he was much larger, and broader in the shoulders; yet his size availed him nothing.

"What could I do?" Herbert asked of Seaton, weeks after, in speaking of the affair. "You see he drew off to hit me, and I *had* to get in one blow,

very straight and very hard." Very straight, indeed, went it from the sinewy shoulder. How thankful was Herbert then, that he had "shunned delights and lived laborious days;" and that temperance and an out-door training had hardened his fine muscles and given him the steadiest and quickest of nerves. The blow might almost have been from a sledge-hammer, and the man went down like a log. Herbert leaned against the arm of the seat and looked at the other "tough."

"Have you anything to say to me?" he asked; and there was no reply, beyond some muttered profanity. The ruffians had found their Waterloo, and, at the next station, one of them helped the other to leave the train. Then those present poured upon Herbert compliments, thanks, and offers of hospitality, but he dismissed the matter as of little consequence, and thought no more of it, especially in the preoccupation born of weighty responsibility.

After some hours of uncertain and precarious progress, the train approached an important point. A great crowd surrounded the station, composed of many and diverse elements—some excitement-seekers, some merely curious persons, and a large number having, to Herbert's experienced eye, the decided appearance of evil intent. As the train came to a stand-still, the conductor entered and came quickly to his side.

"We are to take on a carload of soldiers here, Mr. Somers," said he, "regulars, who are bound West to protect the railroad."

"Very well," said Herbert. "Where are they?"

"The car is on the track alongside of us and a little in the rear, sir. The yard engine will run it back to the switch and then push it up to us. You will be able to step to its front platform from our rear one in a few moments." As he spoke, the car was moving back, and it was soon seen approaching. An officer in the uniform of the United States Army stood on the platform, and, as he was brought nearer, his face and figure seemed familiar to Herbert. Another moment, and he recognized the stalwart and soldierlike man who had received his fair charge at his hands, at the Eastern depot in Boston; and he was soon exchanging hearty greetings with him.

"I thought we should meet," said the captain, "and here we are. Battery B is very much at your service, and no rioters need apply. Come into our car and have a chat."

As Herbert was about to comply with the kindly invitation, some one touched his arm, and he turned to see the old gentleman whose cause he had just championed. He had his satchel and roll of rugs with him, and was evidently leaving the train.

"I cannot part with you without knowing your name and address, my dear sir," said he. "Will you kindly give me them?" He read the card which Herbert handed him, then looked up with a pleasant smile.

"We could hardly be strangers," said he, "even if you had not rendered me a service which I can

never forget, and for which you will find me truly grateful. My name is Samuel Thurston, and I have a favorite niece at Bar Harbor at present, in whose letters I have seen pleasant mention of you. I fear we must part, but I insist that you send word to me at the — Club, New York, the moment you arrive in that city again; good-bye," and he shook Herbert's hand warmly and left the train.

"Looks like a benevolent old fellow," said the captain, "and uncommonly solvent. I wish I were as sure of my promotion in ten years as I am that you will be down in his will." Herbert had been taken by surprise, and his thoughts turned into quite a new channel, but the captain was far too hearty and genial a companion to be ignored; so he took a seat with him in his car, and was presented to two young subalterns. This car was filled with soldiers, who sat upright in their seats, each man holding his rifle with its butt on the floor.

"Look business-like, don't they?" asked the captain. "We are very popular with some people now. Did you ever hear of the lines which a British Tommy Atkins scribbled on the walls of Delhi after its capture from the mutineers, and when the payment of prize-money was delayed? They were something as follows:

"When war is rife and danger's nigh,
God and the soldier's all the cry;
When war is o'er and danger righted,
God is forgotten, and the soldier slighted."

"That is the way with us. Our army has few

friends in time of peace, and every one seems authorized to abuse us."

"That is a very pessimistic view of things," said Herbert. "I fancy you have many more friends than you think."

"I hope so," said the captain; "at all events, I do not understand how any well-informed or sensible man can fail to see that a time is coming when we shall be sorely needed. This little trouble here is but a mild suggestion of what we shall have by and by. I think our people are dwelling in a fool's paradise. We have seen a Western city in the hands of a ferocious mob of foreigners who could not speak a word of English, and the authorities temporizing with them. Do you not feel, when such things follow, one after another, and each worse than the last, that evil times are coming? A good many wise men think that our power of assimilation is failing us; and that, in our fostering of indiscriminate and unlimited immigration (except in the case of the peaceable Chinese), we have raised up a Frankenstein who will give us a lively time in quelling him. It was a clever writer who said that, inasmuch as our country has been made the 'cess-pool and spittoon' for Europe, there are children living who will see more blood shed on that account than was spent in the whole of the great Civil War."

"You may be right," said Herbert. "I have often wondered what our so-called 'Triumphant Democracy' had in store for itself."

"Think upon what evil times we have already

fallen," said the officer. "Why, we are becoming a system of *imperia in imperio*, instead of a homogeneous nation. Do you know that there are places, even cities, in the West, where not only is English an unused tongue, but the Germans refuse to have it otherwise, or to have anything but German taught in their schools? Do you know that anarchist clubs and societies are very numerous, and increasing daily? Do you know what a hot-bed of anarchy, nihilism, and terrorism there is, not only in Chicago, but also in New York?

"Do not think me unpatriotic. I am only looking things in the face. I see conventions held, of people distinctly calling themselves 'Irish;' not Americans born in Ireland, but Irish pure and simple, to whom America affords a safe asylum. I see foreign holidays celebrated, and foreign flags carried, on American soil. What I want to know is, where are the old-fashioned Americans, who loved their own country and thought of its welfare rather than that of European nations and alien men? Take the great city of New York, to whose commercial supremacy we point with so much pride; and what kind of an American city is it? It is avowedly the capital of the Irish Republic, and it is the third German city in the world. Its government is largely in the hands of the same Irish colonists, who hoist their own flag on the City Hall, and impede the United States mails by national processions in the streets. Its society is bastard English, and its business largely controlled by foreign merchants and

bankers. It reminds me, in fact, of the curious foreign settlements in China; where people of diverse nationalities occupy the ground, and build houses, and sow seed, and buy and sell, and marry and are given in marriage; and the only persons not taken into consideration at all are the natives of the country."

"I quite see your point," said Herbert; "but what remedy would you suggest?"

"Unfortunately, none. I regard the mischief as done, and irreparable. I fully expect to serve at the barricades myself, and I only hope I shall die for my country before her great troubles come. Heaven knows I do not love the English. I was a youngster in our great war, but the iron entered into my soul when I understood their course toward us, and when a gallant young sailor from our town, serving on the *Kearsage* in her fight with the *Alabama* (that British vessel under Confederate colors), was wounded by a shot cast in a British arsenal, and fired from a British cannon by a British seaman from the Royal Naval Reserve (transferred from the training ship *Excellent*). I say I do not like England; but I do not want to serve in a war with her, brought on by these Irish rulers of ours. No; I would rather die fighting those *hostes humani generis*, the anarchists; and, when my last battle shall come, I trust I may survive until my battery has given them their full allowance of shrapnel shell, quarter-second fuze. But, bless me! how I have been declaiming; and here we come near the place where

we are told to expect trouble. Attention! men. Lieutenant B—— will remain in the car, and Lieutenant H—— go on the rear platform, as the train slows down. Mr. Somers, will you come with me on the front platform?"

Herbert assented, and the two men stood, holding by the brake wheels, as the speed of the train slackened and it approached the station. Here was a crowd of even more threatening aspect than the former one, and men pressed forward with angry gestures.

"See how quickly they will change their tune when they find who we are," said the captain. "They told me to be particularly careful here; but I fancy these fellows are like all the rest."

The train came to a stop, and the crowd surrounded the car. A large man, who seemed to be the leader, came close to where the officer and Herbert stood. He looked carefully at the uniform of the former, then hesitated.

"Cap.," asked he, "may I come on that platform?"

"Certainly."

The man made immediate use of this permission, and then looked through the open door of the car. His face fell in an instant. He turned and glanced at a companion close to the platform, then at the officer and Somers.

"Cap.," again he asked, "may my 'pard' come on that platform?"

"Yes."

The two men looked, as the first had done, at the double rows of armed men, grim and silent ; the embodiment of discipline and power.

"Cap.," once more queried the first man, "regulars, ain't they?"

"Yes."

"Cap., *will you shake hands?*"

They left the platform, and some subtle influence seemed to spread from them to the crowd, in whom there was an evident faltering and change of purpose. Then the train, unmolested, again started ; and the captain, as he drew Herbert into the car and lighted a fresh cigar, said :

"I told you so."

At the next station a telegram was handed to the officer, which he opened and read with great deliberation.

"From the colonel," said he. "Says things are uncommonly lively at the junction. That must be—let me see—about twenty miles ahead. Great shops there, are there not?"

"Yes," replied Herbert.

"He wants us to get on as fast as we can. Do you mind giving the order to the conductor?"

This done, the officer settled himself in his seat.

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," said he. "We shall have enough of rioters in due time. Let us forget for the moment that such things exist. I resign the floor to you. Tell me a story, like a good fellow ; something from the great plains or the mountains, something 'breezy,' as the newspapers

say. I know you must have had plenty of adventures out in that country, and I have seen only just enough of it to fascinate me."

"It is a great region," said Herbert, "but I fear I am not able to do it justice as a *raconteur*. It is curious, however, that a vivid reminiscence of life there has been in my mind to-day—why, of all things in the world, I cannot tell.

"Several years ago, I was with the railroad contractor's party who were carrying the rails over the range. We had surveyed for a short tunnel, but there was a great mushroom mining camp beyond, and a 'boom' was developing itself, so they pressed us to adopt a temporary expedient in the way of a 'switchback'—if you know what that is—a zig-zag line at a heavy grade, which gives you the elevation gradually."

"Yes, I have heard of them," said the captain. "Ticklish things for the nerves, too."

"Well, we saw the business awaiting us, and we drove the work for all it was worth. The road came up a long, steep cañon to its head, where we had our tunnel planned. This would pierce a mountain and bring us out on the rim, so to speak, of one of the great 'parks' of the Sierra Madre, giving a gorgeous western horizon. When the road was finally carried over, the trains were at first timed to reach this spot about sunset; and, in fair weather (which they have there most of the time, you know) and night after night, there would be a perfect chorus of delight from the passengers when the

view broke upon them. The superintendent used to say that this feature of the trip, properly advertised, would enable him to 'lay the other road out cold.' It was certainly very grand and very beautiful, and I can almost see it at this moment.

"I was one of the assistant engineers, and I boarded at the house of a man who lived on a sort of little shelf on the side of the cañon. He was a worthy fellow, not very long from the East, and had a family. You or I would have thought his home a most picturesque one; but neither he nor his wife (a gentle, delicate woman) would agree with us. I have seen many similar cases. Either people leave their old homes too late in life, or they have made a cruel wrench from old associations, and drag a lengthening chain of tender memories; at all events, for some reason or other, they pine amidst the most charming surroundings, and hang their harps on the willows for good and all. Both these worthy people did their daily duty faithfully and uncomplainingly and, I doubt not, would do it to the end; but they were profoundly miserable—and from pure homesickness. In that splendid atmosphere of the cañon, clear and bracing in the morning, balmy and flower-perfumed at sunset, they pined unceasingly for one of those unhealthy, malodorous New England villages, where fevers and consumption have full sway.

"They had a most interesting family, of whom I became very fond. My special favorite was a poor little lame, invalid boy, one of the sweetest children

I ever saw. He must have suffered nearly all the time, but I hardly ever heard him complain. We all took a great interest in him, and, I hope, lightened the burden of his life a bit. The men made him toys, and constructed a comfortable wheel carriage in which he could propel himself over what small tract of level ground the cañon afforded. Then we all told him stories, which he loved to hear. I dare say that many of them were poor enough stuff, but he would sit perfectly still and quite absorbed. We had a surgeon with us, and he did his best for the poor little fellow; but he told me he was wasting away and growing weaker day by day, and was not long for this world. The best he could do was to smooth his downward path for him.

•“After a while the little chap began to take a curious and absorbing interest in our work. I suppose long illness and the gradual approach to another world made him peculiarly subject to fancies; but he conceived the idea that there was a new and beautiful region beyond the mountain barrier, and that we were opening the road to it. This he told me one night when I was sitting by him; and, ‘albeit unused to the melting mood,’ I was almost overcome when he said, in his soft, childlike voice, that the angels told him he would be quite well and free from all his pains and deformities, and as straight and strong as other children, if he could only reach that beautiful country. You can imagine how I felt when he asked me if I could not

hurry the men, and make them open the road as soon as possible."

"Then we all agreed to tell him each day that we were making excellent progress (as indeed we were, for we had an enormous force at work); and we promised him that he should be the very first to ride over the road and look at the new country. One day, a good missionary came to the camp to hold a Sunday service; and he saw the child and talked to him, very kindly and sensibly, too; and read to him about the Promised Land. After that, he always spoke of his fancied region by that name; and all the time he grew weaker and weaker, and his little hands so thin you could almost see through them, and his eyes showing a more and more unearthly brightness.

"We worked very quickly, and I began to fear that the lad was to suffer from the destruction of his illusions; but the doctor said he was nearing his end faster than was our task, and that, in the state of mind in which he was, he would be perfectly satisfied if he lived to see the view of the park and the other ranges far away. So we told him we were almost there; and the men—good, kind fellows—rigged up a platform car with a couch on it, and brought him out to see it, to his great delight.

"The days passed rapidly, and the work went uninterruptedly on; and at last the junction was made between the upper division of the switchback and the rails which had been laid for a short distance beyond the mountain. Every one, from the chief

engineer down, took the greatest interest in keeping our word to the little boy ; so they made up a short train just before sunset, one beautiful day, and put his car ahead, and an engine in the rear, to push instead of drawing it. Meantime the doctor had been looking very grave and shaking his head, and fearing the child would not survive. All the afternoon he had lain quite still and without speaking a word, but he rallied in an instant when the doctor and I went in to tell him that we were ready at last. We carried him out and put him on his couch ; his father and mother and several others being with him, besides ourselves ; and the men all gathered round. The chief engineer (he said he had a little boy of his own away off in Pennsylvania) took charge himself of the train, and our best and most careful engine-driver was at the throttle. We started steadily and easily—you know how they manage those things—on the first span of the switchback. Running slowly out to the end of this, we traversed the second in the opposite direction ; then started on the third, which would bring us over the ridge. Just as we did so, I saw the doctor stoop down, and look at the child, and take his wrist in his hand. Then he hurriedly gave him a draught. The little fellow was terribly faint and weak, but he looked gratefully up in our faces. The train moved on, the grade was surmounted, the summit reached—and then there burst upon our sight the grand, the matchless view. The broad park lay at our feet, the sun was sinking behind the great

mountain wall which bounded it on the farther side, the clouds of gorgeous hue were piled in fleecy splendor over the horizon—how can I describe the scene?

“The poor little fellow’s eyes had been closed; he opened them for one moment; then there came to his face such a rapt expression as I had never seen; then he fell back, quite dead.”

The stout captain paid this little story the tribute of two great tears, which rolled down his bronzed cheek.

“A charming tale,” said he, “and mighty pathetic. But see; we are slowing down. We must be near the junction.”

For the third time, the train approached a station surrounded by a swaggering, surging crowd; then it stopped, and the conductor entered with a flurried air.

“I am sorry to say, Mr. Somers,” said he, “that the strikers have persuaded both the engineer and fireman of our train to desert their posts.”

“That looks like business,” said the captain.

“And, captain, the colonel is here. The station-master says he requests you to report to him at once, in the depot.”

“That looks still more like business. I will be with him in a second.” As he was leaving his seat, however, the colonel came in. Returning the junior officer’s salute and shaking hands with Herbert, to whom he was presented, he deliberately took a seat.

“Put a sentry at each door of this car, captain,”

said he, "then we can discuss matters here better than elsewhere. You represent the railroad, I believe, Mr. Somers?"

"I do, colonel."

"That is good. I presume you do not need to be told that affairs are in a bad way here; but let us put our heads together and we will straighten them out, or, by Heaven! we will know the reason why."

CHAPTER VIII.

To Arms!

THE colonel was a tall, handsome man, no longer young, and showing very much of gray in hair and whiskers. He was straight as an arrow, and held his head erect. His face was stern in repose, but lighted with a pleasant smile when he spoke. Herbert remembered Seaton's description, and found himself admiring him. The old soldier had an impressive, deliberate way of speaking, and seemed to weigh his words well before uttering them.

"As I understand it, Mr. Somers, you must reach the farther terminus of the road, must you not? I learned from the station-master that you meant to do that."

"Yes, colonel," said Herbert, "that is my post. If you will manage to support me, I will try to get the train through in some way or other. I presume the men have detached the engine, for I heard the air escaping from the brake-pipes. If need be, I will act as engine-driver myself, and improvise a stoker."

Just then, voices were heard at the door, and the sentry, saluting, said :

"Two gentlemen to see Mr. Somers."

"Let them enter," said the colonel, and there ap-

peared an elderly man, and a younger, very bright-looking fellow, with an expression on his face half quizzical, half eager. The older man spoke first.

"Mr. Somers, I am one of the directors of the road. I live in this vicinity, and could not reach town in time for the meeting. I hear they have put you in charge at the other end. I would like to go with you and give you any benefit you can gain from my acquaintance with that part of the country."

The younger man carefully adjusted a pair of eye-glasses, then held out his hand to Herbert.

"Upon my word, old fellow," said he, "I should think the forces were assembling for one of the old Harvard and Yale baseball matches. Whence come you, *O! illustrissime et doctissime?* Come you from the wilds of the Boundless West or the comfortable parlors of the University Club?"

"Well, of all things!" said Herbert, who had already greeted the director. "Rather let me ask what *you* are doing here, whom I last saw, in correct English tweeds, looking at the Eton and Harrow cricket match at Lord's grounds. What strange fate has brought you hither, my dear Eustis?"

"I was tired of amusing myself, and concluded to go to work. Behold me now, in deed and truth, a horny-handed son of toil like yourself. I went into the shops here a year ago, and worked until the strike came on."

"Let me introduce you to my friends," said Herbert, and he did so. "Now, Eustis, tell me

how to get this train on its way. Have all the engineers and firemen struck?"

"Every one—bad luck to them."

"Very well, here is an engineer, in the person of myself. Do you not think you could rake up a fireman?"

"Yes, I know of one, tolerably competent. I, at least, have confidence in him."

"Who is he?"

"One Sidney Eustis, A.B. and A.M. (Yale), at your service. A Yale stoker against a Harvard driver, and may the best man win."

"Good," said Herbert, laughing and shaking hands, as did the rest, with his plucky friend. "Now, how shall we get an engine?"

"I think you will need the colonel's help for that," said Eustis. "They swear that one shall not come out of the round-house."

"Eh! what? Shall not come out of the round-house?" ejaculated the colonel. "Captain, send a sergeant and a file of men with our friends here, and stand by to lend them a further hand if they need it. Have the men load with ball and fix bayonets."

"I have a couple of roundabouts of overall stuff, in a room near by," said Eustis, "and I will despatch a small boy to get them. Then, captain, if you will send the men, we will have that engine out in double-quick time."

The soldiers formed on the platform and walked with the two men to the round-house, the crowd

sullenly making way for them. This house was at once cleared, and steam gotten on the engine, which then, guarded still, moved slowly to its place.

"Now I want a platform car for a couple of Gatling guns," said the colonel. "If you will tell me where one is to be found, I will have some of my men trundle it out." This, also, was soon done, and the train made up. Hearing that the strikers had threatened to roll engines down upon it, on a steep grade some distance ahead, the colonel took pains to let his orders be clearly heard by the crowd; and these orders were to the effect that if a single shot were heard, or a stone thrown at the train, the troops should fire without waiting for instructions. From the engine, which carried a guard, Eustis looked out, eye-glasses on nose, smiling unconcernedly at the muttering crowd about him, and waiting for the conductor's signal. It came in due time, and then Herbert started the engine, climbed on his seat, and sat with hand on the air-brake lever, keeping a sharp lookout ahead; while Eustis shovelled the coal from the tender into the gaping mouth of the furnace, as if he had never known other occupation.

"I shall have to give you points on the route," he told Herbert, "but I can do that and stoke too."

As the train rolled along the straight stretches of road, rounded the curves, and climbed the grade, Herbert, conscious all the time that every faculty was concentrated on his work, nevertheless found,

as has been the experience of many men, his thoughts wandering. Not a thing escaped him—the track ahead, the switches and signals, the state of his gauges—yet he could see, in his mind's eye, the top of Green Mountain, and the beautiful girl at his side.

No harm came to them, as one mile-post after another was passed; and the passengers chatted together as unconcerned as if all were well on the road, and their trip but a pleasure excursion.

“Stirring times, these, sir,” said the colonel in his bluff way to the elderly director.

“I should say so, most decidedly,” was the response; “but mischievously and viciously stirring. I am an old man now, and I have never seen anything like them. It seems to have come to pass that corporations are not only without rights, but also without friends. Take this one, for instance. When it was projected, I was a youngster, but I remember well how popular were the men proposing to construct it. Towns and counties vied with each other in offering aid and inducements to go on with the work. It was to build up the country, and greatly increase the prosperity of the people along its line; and it has done so, my word on it, and right royally. From the beginning, it has been carefully managed; so its stock has become a favorite investment for conservative people.”

“Yes,” said the colonel, “even some of us poor army folk have our little holdings.”

“And draw your dividends, too; and I am glad

of it, and wish you had more. It is held by a very unusually large number of persons, including many widows and orphans. Yet, here are not only these strikers, but a lot of the papers as well, howling at this corporate body of excellent and worthy people as if they were an organized band of pirates and robbers."

"It is curious," said the colonel. "I have often thought of it. Why should the public be hostile to great and useful enterprises?"

"The real public—the men and women who make up the best part of our population—are *not* hostile. A lot of demagogues, with voice and pen, and with yeoman's aid from the press, put forward certain sentiments, and assert that they are those of the public; and this public is too busy or too lazy to deny it."

"In the library of my last post," said the captain, "there was a stray copy of the works of Sir Thomas Browne; and I remember reading his declaration that *vox populi* was anything but *vox Dei*. He also said that a good sample of popular clamor was afforded in the people of Ephesus, who, for the space of two hours, and not knowing in the least why they did it, cried out, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!'"

"Sir Thomas Browne was a gentleman and a scholar," said the director, heartily, "and I wish we had a few like him in these days."

"I confess," said the colonel, "that I have no adequate comprehension of the ethics of these questions, the relations of capital and labor and the like;

but I see the principle of the present issue very clearly. These men were working on the railroad, and, from all I hear, were well-to-do and contented. For some causes, just or unjust I know not, probably the latter, they decide to strike. At once they are joined by the members of the dangerous classes, and, as far as I can see, they welcome their aid. I notice that the papers vehemently disclaim any sympathy on the part of the honest workingman with the scoundrels allied with him, but I should like to hear from the workingman himself; or, better, I should like to see him prove his antipathy for these creatures."

"Good," said the director, "you have hit the nail on the head, colonel."

"Now," said the officer, warming up, "when it comes to this pass, the authorities should stop parleying and discussing, and put the disturbances down; should use the *main de fer* without the *gant de velours*. It is so much easier to handle these things if you only start early and act vigorously. If I had my way, I would not depend upon infantry, but send a light battery or two where they were needed. Nothing like that for a demoralizer. Why, gentlemen, give me a good paved street—the rougher the better—and let me go down it at a gallop, with six field pieces, the same number of caissons, and six horses to each, and I will lay you the odds that the crowd won't wait for me to unlimber."

His face had flushed slightly from the enthusiasm of the old artillerist, and his cigar had gone out.

When the train stopped for water, Herbert Somers came back to the passenger car for a conference. It had now grown quite dark, and he had been running slowly and cautiously.

"When do you want to reach our destination, colonel?" he asked. "Do you not think it would be better to proceed slowly and time ourselves to make the city about daylight or just before?"

"Nothing better," said the colonel; "then I can make my dispositions quietly and effectively. I suppose you know we are to meet other troops there."

So, in the gray dawn, the train stopped a short distance from the terminal station of the road; the soldiers filed out from the cars, and formed ranks; and Herbert and Eustis, tired but happy, left the engine they had so successfully managed.

"I will now," said the latter, adjusting his eyeglasses, "take account of damages. Item: A new silk scarf well marked with soot and cinders. Item: A new waistcoat, ditto. Item: Oh, ye gods! a pair of trousers such as I flatter myself you do not often see, plentifully bespattered from the oil-can. That is the unkindest cut of all. They came 'from the other side, you know,' only a fortnight ago, and just look at them now.

"Where, oh! where are the visions of morning
Fresh as the dews of our prime?
Gone, like tenants that quit without warning,
Down the back entry of time."

"And do you know it is Sunday, too? I feel like an old fellow named Uncle Jerry, in Byfield, Mas-

sachusetts, who only worked long enough to earn money to buy rum. One Saturday he had but six cents. 'Well, that will buy you half a pint,' said a neighbor. 'Can't you keep Sunday on half a pint?' To which responded Uncle Jerry, in deep disdain, '*What kind of a Sunday will it be?*'"

For that city it was, indeed, such a Sunday as it had never known before. The concentration of the troops upon it had been successfully effected, and the inhabitants awoke to find it well sprinkled with "boys in blue." At an early hour, sentries were posted to protect a portion of the railroad property, but no attempt was made to send out trains. In the afternoon, the strikers and their adherents filled the streets and began to show signs of ill-feeling. At last, locking arms so as to cover the sidewalk, they jostled a sentry who came in their way. The officer in charge, fresh from West Point, had learned nothing in his text-books to cover a case like this, but he told the sergeant who reported the occurrence that, if it happened again, the offender must be at once arrested and put in the guard-house. Then, somewhat doubtful as to his course, he sought the colonel, whom he found enjoying a post-prandial cigar on the hotel piazza, and who listened attentively to his story.

"And is it possible, lieutenant," said he, when the young man stopped, "that in your inexperience you have given the order to *put an American citizen in the guard-house*, to deprive him of liberty without warrant of law? Return to your post at once, sir, with

your commanding officer's express instructions. If any — scoundrel jostles your sentry, let the man give him the butt of his rifle over his miserable, riotous skull, or use the bayonet, or, by Heaven! blow a bullet through him; but on no account put an American citizen in the guard-house!"

Meanwhile Herbert, with Eustis as an able assistant, was making his arrangements; and he had determined upon the attempt to start a train on the Monday morning. Some men had been found who were willing to serve if protected, and the number was increasing rapidly. It was late at night before the two friends could retire to extemporized beds in the railroad office.

Next day, with the men at hand, Herbert made his train ready. As the operations progressed, a crowd gathered, growing larger each moment, and manifesting a most belligerent spirit. Soon the streets about the station were blocked with people, and then rose murmurings, growls, and sometimes shouts of anger and defiance. The new men did their duty, but many of them plainly showed their alarm. Herbert quite appreciated the features of the situation; but he was conscious of a feeling of grim satisfaction that he was chosen for this post of honor, and an intense desire to rise to the occasion. Every faculty was at extreme tension, and no detail or change of the situation escaped his vigilant eye.

"I feel," said Eustis to him after a while, "just like the person in one of Bret Harte's stories who advised a companion in difficulty and misfortune to

'just go outside and *cuss*, and see how good it makes one feel.' When I think of the relations I have had with these men; how I have lived among them, and taken an interest in their welfare and that of their families, and tried to help them and do them good; when I now see them engaged in this wretched strike, and turned against us, and doing all this mischief, it makes me furious. Think of the pure *cussedness* of the whole thing. They can only do a certain amount of mischief, and destroy a certain amount of property, and perhaps kill and wound and maim a number of people; and then they must ultimately succumb, unless they are prepared to fight the Government of the United States. Oh! the pity of it!"

Soon appeared the mayor, the sheriff, the chief of police, and a few of his men. The city father was nervous, even a little timorous.

"Do you think you had best try to start this train?" he asked of Herbert.

"I ought to do so," was the reply.

"But you may be assaulted, may even be killed."

"Perhaps; but then there was an old heathen who lived a great many years ago, who, when told that if he took a certain journey he would die, replied that it was necessary for him to go, but not necessary for him to live. And, by the way, time is up, gentlemen; and, if you will excuse me, I will give the trainmen their orders."

Outside of the station was a large yard enclosed by a fence. Hardly had the start been made, and the

engine begun, at a slow pace, to cross this yard, when three or four men emerged from a hiding-place. They made for the locomotive and were about to spring upon it, when Herbert and Eustis, quick as lightning, anticipated them. In the flurry, the engineer stopped the train, but the intruders never secured a foothold on the engine. There was a speedy grapple, a heavy blow or two, and the fellows lay on the ground. Just then there was a rush at the fence, a fearful pressure on it; it swayed and fell; and the crowd, whirling and surging, filled the yard. They came close to the engine; they made as if to storm it; and then Herbert Somers, standing on the step, forgot all else but the *gaudium certaminis*; and, with righteous wrath in his heart, and a voice like a trumpet, he shouted at his assailants:

"Come off this engine? Never!" he roared. "Come and take me—touch me, lay one finger on me, if you dare! Here we are, two or three men against a multitude, and you are armed, too. Why do you not shoot? Because you do not *dare*, you miserable cowards!" He could have said more, but his voice would have been inaudible in the angry roar of the crowd. With curses, and shaking of fists, and brandishing of weapons, they were pressing closer in, when they recoiled. As if risen from the earth, but really coming up at a "double," a battalion of soldiers appeared. As they approached, Herbert sprang from the engine to grasp the hand of his friend, the captain.

"Just in time," said the latter, "and too close a call for comfort. Give me a moment to force this crowd of ruffians back, and I will talk to you."

At the word, the line of glistening bayonets dropped to the horizontal, then pressed inexorably forward. Shoulder to shoulder, like a great wall, the disciplined troops advanced. With cries of dismay and terror, the crowd in front flung themselves upon those behind them, fighting, kicking, struggling to escape the cold steel.

"Halt!" cried the captain. "Now, my dear fellow, why in the name of common sense did you take that risk? Well, it is over for the moment, and here comes the colonel with the mayor and sheriff. Now you will see some fun."

"You may be quite right, my dear sir," the colonel was saying to the mayor, who had a most perplexed and unhappy air, "but such discussions can wait."

"When he is at his very fiercest, and means most mischief, he invariably becomes preternaturally polite," whispered the captain to Herbert. "Woe be to these rioters if they press him now."

"Mr. Sheriff," said the colonel, with much bland formality, "I think you have certain functions to perform in connection with the Riot Act. Will you do me the favor to proceed with them; and may I suggest expedition, if quite convenient to you?"

The functionary addressed began nervously to read a document which he took from his pocket; but there was still so much noise that hardly a word

could be heard. At last he closed, and turned, almost with a sigh of relief, to the colonel.

"A thousand thanks, my dear sir," said the latter; "most kind of you, I am sure. Now, will you permit me to offer you an escort—and you, too, Mr. Mayor—to your homes, or where you will? Yes? That is right. Good-day, gentlemen," and they withdrew.

"*Sic exit Bombalino*," said the captain. "It worries the old man to have civilian officials in the way when he is responsible. Now it is his turn."

The colonel began his dispositions with great promptitude. The crowd had gained a certain amount of confidence, and were close to the bayonets, cursing and reviling the soldiers, and taunting them with not daring to fire.

"Ugly crowd," whispered the captain. "More like Parisian *sans-culottes* than any I have seen for a long time. The colonel knows his business, but, if I were he, I would charge them now."

At this moment there emerged from the depot a couple of Gatling guns, with their detachments. The men were wheeling them into position, on the two flanks of the infantry, when Herbert saw a curiously familiar figure emerge from the little group following them and run toward him. It was with the greatest surprise, the most peculiar sense of the incongruousness, the complete strangeness of the meeting, that he recognized Edgar Ramsay! The poor fellow had evidently over-exerted himself, for he was pale as death; and, as Herbert wrung his

right hand, he pressed his left on his heart, and could not speak for some moments.

"Edgar, my dear fellow, how are you, and what brought you here, of all places in the world? And what is the matter with you?"

Ramsay answered as soon as he could.

"I reached New York but a few days ago—and I was anxious to see you—and I heard you were here—and in danger—and I wanted to join you."

As he had written Herbert, the strong soul mastered the weak body. The faintest tinge of color came back to his cheeks, and he regained his voice.

"But, my dear fellow," said Herbert, "this is no place for you. Your duty does not call you hither, and you have no right to incur danger needlessly."

Before the words were out of his mouth, he saw they might as well not have been spoken; for Ramsay's eyes told the story of his stout heart and his unflinching determination.

In one of the volumes of Kinglake's *Invasion of the Crimea*, that charming writer describes an officer who, in one of the worst battles of that campaign, succeeded, through the death of his senior, to the command of his regiment. He says that he was a man of great gentleness and piety, and that his thoughts dwelt habitually on the glories and joys of another world, but that he continually "thanked God for making him a stout soldier." So Edgar Ramsay, delicate and sensitive, knew no thought of fear; and faced danger with a pleasant smile on his usually sad face, and an absolutely inflexible purpose.

"I care for no one in the world as I do for you, Herbert," said he. "I heard you were here, and I managed to follow you, and found you. I am going to stay with you, and lend you my humble help. See; I feared you had no revolver, and I have brought you one—you too, Eustis—how are you, old friend?"

"Ramsay," said Eustis, snapping off his eyeglasses with a twitch of the lids, "I have not run across you for a long time, and this is a curious place for a meeting; but I am glad to see you on any terms; and you will allow me to say that your head is uncommonly level. If my fingers have itched to close on one thing more than another, it was a good six-shooter. Thank you a thousand times."

Even as they spoke, the troops had fallen slightly back; and at each end of the line, and pointing a little inward, were the deadly *mitrailleuses*. Behind them, in the "position of attention, head erect, thumbs on seam of trousers, chin tucked in, but without restraint," stood the sergeants; and on the cranks were the hands of the men who would fire at the word.

"Did you ever see such devilish machines?" asked Eustis of Herbert. "Think of grinding destruction out of a coffee-mill!"

The colonel had told some men to bring an empty box, lying not far away, and upon this he mounted, standing straight as an arrow, and the very picture of a soldier.

"Citizens," said he, in ringing tones, "the civil

officers have done their duty and gone away; and it devolves upon me to take charge here. It has pleased you to make a great disturbance, and attack and destroy property. I do not know why you did so, and it is no concern of mine. When the United States troops are called in, it is naturally understood that the time for words and peaceable measures is past. I am aware that on such occasions your authorities are apt to call on the citizen soldiery—brave fellows they are, too; I have often commanded them. They are your townsmen, and they are reluctant to fire on you; and they stand and let you stone them, and maim them, and kill them. Now these men here are altogether different. They are professional soldiers, and they are not accustomed to being stoned nor to use blank cartridges, nor anything of that sort. When I give the word, they will fire on you; and, if they do, may the Lord have mercy on your souls! Now," he drew an old coppery-gold family watch from his pocket, "I will give you just two minutes to disperse—disperse completely, I say, and disband, or, so sure as I am alive, by Heaven! I shall give the order."

He stepped down and stood quite still, with his eyes on the watch. Not one of the civilians present had ever known such suspense or witnessed such a scene. Edgar Ramsay drew close to Herbert, his eyes shining like burning coals.

"*One minute*," said the colonel. "READY!" In a sudden and complete panic, the crowd broke and

ran. In a few hours, between military and police, their power was gone, and many were in confinement. The lesson had been well taught, and did not need to be repeated.

As the rout was beginning, Herbert drew a long breath, Ramsay turned a little pale again in the revulsion of feeling, and Eustis carefully adjusted the hammer of his revolver. The colonel, after he had sent his officers in different directions, to carry out his orders, came to join the group. Eustis offered him a cigar.

"Thank you," said he, carefully cutting off the end, "and, gentlemen, I offer you my best congratulations. You all behaved like trumps. Mr. Ramsay" (Herbert had presented Edgar), "I am delighted to make your acquaintance. Mr. Somers, in my humble opinion, the force of this strike is completely broken. It was a bad one, too. I have had to do with rioters before, and I know them pretty well. I was in a certain armory in war and draft times, and the crowd besieged us. I sent them all the warning I could, and I swore to them that after three blasts of the bugle, I should fire the two field pieces I had in the building (the doors were closed). They jeered at me, and began battering at the door. Then the bugle sounded. Again came the blows of a piece of timber, used as a battering-ram, and the bugle sounded a second time. I told the men to get hold of the lock-strings—the guns were loaded to the muzzle with grape and canister—and then a tremendous blow started the

hinges of the door, so I had the bugle blow for the last time, and I threw the doors open, and fired both pieces at point-blank range. That was the end of the rioters. Of course they were worse than we had here. All the same—take an old soldier's word for it—it was a mighty close thing about five minutes ago."

CHAPTER IX.

Placida Sub Libertate Quies.

A LITTLE time had elapsed since the events recorded in the last chapter, and circumstances, for some of those of whom this story tells, had greatly changed. Like so many others of the kind, the railroad strike, vigorously handled, had hopelessly collapsed. The officials of the road, with smiling faces, were making up their bills for damages to be paid by the city and county which had failed to protect their property from destruction. There was no one, however, to whom the foolish strikers could send in *their* bills for lost time and wages; no one to compensate wives and children for the suffering and privation undergone by them. Herbert had finished his work for the time being, and had been granted a liberal leave of absence. With Ramsay and Eustis he had arrived in New York, and they were sitting in the soft summer air, on the pleasant balcony of a club, looking out on the green of a spacious square. Herbert was in the best of spirits; Eustis was absorbed in contemplation of a new suit, "just received from the other side," to which he made many jocular allusions; and Ramsay, though evidently quite happy, said little and showed in appearance what a delicate and weak man he really was. The

colonel had gone back to his post, having given the three a cordial invitation to visit him there.

"And when you come," he said, "be sure to bring your satchels, for I've quarters for you."

The captain, too, had gone to Fort Leavenworth. Herbert found out that it was to his vigilant energy they owed their prompt rescue when on the engine, and he tried to thank him, but the gallant officer cut him short.

"My dear fellow," said he, "when you stood brother to a certain little girl who needed help, you put me in the position of a man who can't get square. I beg you to say no more about it."

The elderly director, whom they had managed to keep in a safe place during the worst of the troubles, had made a flattering report to his colleagues, and, in the letter granting him leave of absence, the president had alluded to this report, and had, as Herbert expressed it, "given him taffy." Moreover, Mr. Samuel Thurston had called upon him as soon as his arrival in New York was announced, and had been very civil indeed. He was what the reporters call a "capitalist," and he owned much stock in the railroad on which the strike occurred. He gave Herbert an excellent lunch and persuaded him to drink a bottle of Burgundy with him; but the best thing he did was to talk about his niece at Bar Harbor.

"She wants me to go up and see her, bless her pretty face," said he, "but, great as the temptation is, I must resist it. I am an old man, and my habits

are fixed. I never sleep off Manhattan Island. Of course I go to the beaches on summer afternoons, but I take care to get back at night to my own comfortable house and my big bath-room and library. Yes, my dear young friend, New York is good enough for me. I am an old Knickerbocker, and I should be all at sea among those Praise-God-Barebones Yankees in Massachusetts and Maine. Some of my good friends live there in New England, to be sure; but I would rather see them when they come to New York. I might as well go on a Greely Relief party as to Bar Harbor. No; I will send some messages and a little present by you, and I will see you before you go."

"I say," cried Eustis, as he threw away the end of a cigarette, "this is all very well for you bloated aristocrats ——"

"'Bloated aristocrats' is good, in my case," interrupted Herbert.

"Well, if I were as solid as you are with two elderly gentlemen, both rolling in wealth, I would soon be an aristocrat, or I'd know the reason why," said Eustis. "I would work them for all they were worth, and that is saying a good deal. What I was about to state, when you interrupted, was that it was all very well for you two fellows to become what a friend of mine calls 'street inspectors' in New York, but I must go back and rejoin the toiling millions. Yes, I mean it. Now, be good fellows, and go to Coney Island and dine with me. *Nunc vino pellite curas; cras ingens iterabimus*

æquor; the *æquor* in the case being the ferry to Jersey City."

So down the three went to that pleasant beach near the great city, where the soft, cool air comes in from the ocean, and the twin lights of the Navesink Highlands shine in friendly juxtaposition; where the strains of the splendid band pleasantly reach the ears of the diners; and where the cares which infest the day are blown landward with the smoke of the after-dinner Havanas.

Next morning Somers and Ramsay saw Eustis off by that train of all trains, the "Chicago Limited," and then prepared for their own pilgrimage to the "north countree."

In Herbert's valise, as they boarded the big Sound steamer that afternoon, were parcels from Mr. Thurston for his niece, suggestive of both caramels and jewelry; and for these he cared as for the apple of his eye. After a day pleasantly spent in Boston (including a visit to that corridor in Memorial Hall at Cambridge, which should be the Mecca of every Harvard alumnus, and through which few of them can pass dry-eyed) they embarked in the Rockland steamer; and, through the hours of late afternoon and twilight, watched the beautiful North Shore. Transferred in the early morning to the smaller steamer, they began that indescribably charming trip from Rockland to the Desert Isle, through the beautiful group of islands constituting the Penobscot Archipelago. The weather was fine and perfectly clear. As the

estuary of the broad river opened to the northward, Ramsay looked wistfully toward Castine, once "the extreme outpost of French empire in America."

"I must see it soon," said he, almost with a sigh. Then the steamer passed between Deer Isle, and, some distance to the southward, a densely-wooded island rising six hundred feet in the air.

"There is a souvenir of your friend, Samuel de Champlain, Edgar," said Herbert. "He gave that the name of *Isle au Haut*, and in all these years, since 1604, the dwellers in these parts have not been able to get rid of the appellation which the French left behind them. To be sure, they call it 'Isle of Holt,' but that is only a mild perversion. It is an interesting place and well worth a visit. A syndicate of gentlemen have acquired a large part of it, and built a club-house; and I suppose it will soon be a watering-place."

"Just think," said Ramsay, "that when Champlain named these places he was on his way to search for Norumbega. Can you not fancy with what eagerness he must have gazed from the deck of his little vessel, as he neared the mouth of the Pentagoët; and what a fair land all this region must have seemed to him?"

"Well, yes; I suppose Champlain was an *enfant du siècle*, and, therefore, credulous and superstitious; but he was a good fellow, and a rattling sailor."

"I wish I had been with him," said Ramsay; and then he sat quiet for a long time, as the boat cleft

its way through the narrow passages and among the islands which dot that charming bit of sea; and until Blue Hill Bay, in all its placid beauty, opened on the port side, and the summits of Mt. Desert, thrown into curious blending from that point of view, rose grandly on the horizon.

"Perhaps, Edgar," said Herbert, "I do not go all lengths with you in glorification of the good old times in these parts; but I ask you, a man who has seen something of the world, if this be not as delightful a short sea trip as you ever took. I do not think the view of Mt. Desert as imposing from this side as from the north, but it seems to me that the Hesperides, or the Isles of the Blest, might well have been situated here. By the way, do we touch at Bass Harbor, I wonder?"

"No, sir; we do not," said a man standing by him, whom he had not noticed before. He was young, but his dress was as of one much older, and his manner gentle and grave; his face was pale, thin, and closely shaven; his eyes were deep set and sober; and his manner of speaking was very deliberate and precise, as if he were one who weighed his words well, and knew that speech is silver and silence golden.

"Thank you," said Ramsay, looking at him with interest. "Do you make this trip often?"

"Oh, yes," replied the young man, in his low, soft voice, "my business makes that necessary."

"And your business is—may I ask?"

"Certainly, sir. Preaching."

Ramsay drew a chair near this new acquaintance, and asked him to take it, but he insisted on going for another, and on Edgar's occupying the one he had himself brought. There was something very pleasing about his whole appearance and manner; also an unmistakable atmosphere of earnestness and humility. Herbert saw this as well as his friend, and he, too, drew a chair near. Then, in answer to questions and with perfect frankness, their new acquaintance spoke of his work and experiences. It was clear that his whole soul was in his duties, and that hard toil and self-denial were his daily habit. Between the points in his long "circuit," which must be reached on schedule time and in turn, stretched leagues of both land and water; and seas were rough, roads bad, and conveyances precarious; such things, however, moved him not at all, but were encountered with cheerful indifference. It would have been hard to imagine two men more widely removed from each other in circumstances of birth, education, experience, and worldly position than this preacher and Edgar Ramsay; yet in an instant the earnest, struggling soul of the latter had recognized, by subtle insight, its true fellow, and gone out in sympathy to meet it. It shone in his eyes as he sat listening to the simple narrative of the rude experiences of an itinerant; such as that of the people on one island who, almost to a man, joyfully welcomed him on his visits, gathered from every quarter of its wide expanse to listen to him, and diligently "searched the Scriptures" between

whiles. Such a man, thought Ramsay, might have been that good Parson Avery, who, as the exquisite poem relates, went with his family from Newburyport in the little shallop

" Away where duty led,
And the voice of God seemed calling, to break the living
bread,
To the souls of fishers starving on the rocks of Marblehead."

" Had his new friend ever heard that beautiful story?" he asked, and as he had not, but would dearly love so to do, he told it him. Both these men had the poet's soul, and, as the lines left the narrator's lips, he and his listener were living the scene over for themselves. One of the green ledges of the Desert Isle, now close at hand, might have been the " Rock of Avery's Fall;" just here might it have been that,

" Blotted out were all the coast-lines, gone were rock and
wood and sand;
Grimly anxious stood the skipper with the rudder in his hand,
And questioned of the darkness which was sea, and which was
land."

Doubtless, it had more than once been thus with this hearer of Ramsay's, and now *his* soul was in his eyes as he listened to the pathetic verses.

" And the preacher heard his dear ones, nestled round him,
weeping sore.

' Never heed, my little children! Christ is walking on before.
To the pleasant land of heaven, where the sea shall be no
more.'

"All at once the great cloud parted, like a curtain drawn
aside,
To let down the torch of lightning on the terror far and wide,
And the thunder and the whirlwind together smote the tide.
.

"From his struggle in the darkness with the wild waves and
the blast,
On a rock where every billow broke about him as it passed,
Alone of all his household, the man of God was cast.

"Then a comrade heard him praying, in the pause of wave
and wind,
'All my own have gone before me, and I linger just behind;
Not for life I ask, but only for the rest Thy ransomed find!'
.

"The ear of God was open to his servant's last request;
As the strong wave swept him downward, the sweet hymn up-
ward pressed,
And the soul of Father Avery went, singing, to its rest."

The eager listener had turned his head away, and
now he hurriedly brushed his hand across his eyes,
but he said nothing.

"Where did you pick that up, Edgar, and how on
earth do you remember it?" asked Herbert.

"Why, often when I have been in Paris in the
body, I have been in my native New England in
spirit, and I do not know how any lover of her
scenery can do without Whittier. Then I have
read the lines so often, that I have unconsciously
learned them."

Meantime, the powerful engines had been send-
ing the steamer at a rapid pace toward Southwest
Harbor, and now, ere they knew it, they were near-

ing the dock. The young preacher gathered his scanty belongings and came to bid Herbert and Ramsay good-bye. He shook hands heartily with the former, and, when he approached the latter, his manner was most earnest and kindly.


"I shall never, in all my life, forget this meeting with you, sir," said he, "and something tells me we shall see each other again. Farewell, and God bless you!"

They watched him as, carrying his luggage, and respectfully saluted by those he met, he walked up the road. Then the steamer swung away from the wharf and ploughed her course on towards her destination.

Meantime, at Bar Harbor, the pleasant summer days had sped far too quickly with those for whom good fortune had spread the feast of Nature's charms, and bidden them enjoy themselves to the full. The pretty, gay dresses lighted up the hotel verandas, the canoes glided between the rock-bound islands, and the "click" of the lawn-tennis rackets by day rivalled the strains of the band at the nightly hops. The buck-board horses looked as if an S. P. C. A. were much needed for their good, and the dry fogs brought new color to the cheeks of the young girls.

Among these same young girls, Helen Thurston was easily first, as she had been all the season, in beauty and general attractiveness; but she had not seemed quite herself since the count made his appearance. Those who knew her well, and were fond of her, began almost to agree with Seaton that the

Frenchman had the evil eye ; such influence did he seem to have over her. As for the world of Bar Harbor at large, it began to talk a little anent his devotion to the young girl. We moralize about, and satirize, the disposition of our people to run after foreigners, but we do not properly appreciate what a disgusting, demoralizing and unpatriotic colonialism it demonstrates. It is far more deeply seated and widely spread than most of us are willing to acknowledge, and its growth is quite worthy of the attention of the critic and the censor. Thus, of those who commented on the Frenchman's devotion to Helen, all or most would have eagerly drawn this devotion to themselves. What the gentle young creature herself thought of the affair, or to what extent her feelings might be enlisted, not those nearest to her could tell. The Frenchman had displayed an easy assurance, and with this, his personal prestige and his monopolizing air of possession, had the appearance of distancing competitors ; and, as the young men of sporting proclivities put it, he seemed to be " making the running." At this juncture, the speedy advent of Somers and Ramsay was announced and made some little stir, for the fame of their doings and adventures had spread abroad. Seaton had missed his young companion very much, and declared that he should mark with a white stone the day which witnessed his return. When it arrived, he was on the wharf in due time, straining his eyes for the Rockland boat ; and he had heavily subsidized the waiters at the local restaurant in order to



secure the reasonably prompt delivery, and his undisturbed possession, of the lunch he had ordered. For is it not written in the chronicles of Bar Harbor that parties, after waiting for hours at this well-known place, have taken their departure tired and dinnerless? Is it not also written that others, high in the land, have sat, in faultless attire, around the festive board in the upper chamber of the same establishment, waiting for the courses of a dinner to appear in turn, and then

“Looked for the coming that might not be,”

inasmuch as certain of the sojourning golden youths had quietly intercepted and appropriated said toothsome courses? Now, with wise precautions duly taken, he paced the wharf, in the best of spirits, drew long breaths of electric air, and hummed that finest of all cavalry songs, “The Scout.” It was twenty years since he himself had known the “thundering press of knights,” but it came back to him with the words:

“Merely a petrel I, telling the storm is nigh.

Clink we this glass, so may it pass,

Thy homestead by.

Such a home I've left far away;

Loved ones there for me now are sighing;

I can see the moon's placid ray

On roof and tree, and pale face, lying;

Give thy hand, good peasant, to me.

Hearts are hearts, the weary world all over.

Peace still dwell with thine and thee,

So now prayeth the war-worn rover.”

Just before the steamer came in sight, another man made his appearance on the wharf, and in him Seaton recognized the special correspondent of the *Universe*—a pleasant, well-meaning young fellow, gratefully and not infrequently recipient, at his hands, of good cigars.

"Good morning, Mr. Seaton," said he. "I believe you expect Mr. Somers and his friend Mr. Ramsay to-day. Yes? Thank you, I am sure. Don't get such weeds in Newspaper Row, I can tell you. One of 'the boys' in Boston got on to that railroad racket of Mr. Somers' and gave him an A 1 send-off. If I can strike him for an interview here, I'll wire five hundred words special this afternoon, and make a hit. By the way, Mr. Seaton, do you happen to know the French count?"

"I was introduced to him when he arrived, but I hardly know him."

"Well, I've been working him up for all he's worth, and I don't mind telling you that he's beaten me thus far. Between you and me, Mr. Seaton, I think he's about the last run of shad in the way of counts."

Seaton could hardly conceal a smile, and the young man detected it and took fresh courage. "Mr. Seaton," said he, "it would be a big card for me, and money in my pocket, if I could drop on to his record, so I hope you will tell me anything you find out about him. There's the *Mount Desert* coming now."

Seaton had hardly greeted Somers and Ramsay, when he saw the young journalist approaching.

"Now, Herbert," he said, "you must pay the penalty of distinction. Here comes the interviewer; and he is not half a bad fellow. Live and let live. You have made a great success in your line; give him a chance to make one in his. Only stipulate that you shall look over his manuscript; for, with the best intentions in the world, he made a precious mess of things the other day. A man came here from St. Louis, a dollar king of the old-fashioned kind, no railroad contracts nor watering of stock, but solid real estate, an inherited fortune, and an old French name; and he appeared in the despatch as a 'distinguished pork-packer from Chicago.' You probably know what the average St. Louis resident thinks of Chicago, and you can understand the poor man's feelings."

Accordingly, Herbert was very civil and very careful; and, with the exception that he was called "Somes," and said (by the man in the office who "expanded" the despatch) to have been born in Somesville, he came off fairly well, and found himself an object of great interest when the paper reached Bar Harbor.

After the interview, the party walked up the main street, so well remembered by Herbert. All was as before; the airy little shops, the groups of pretty maidens and striped-jacketed youths around the soda fountains and candy counters, the perennial stream of buck-boards. As dinner was in progress at the big hotel, the rattle of knives, forks, and plates replaced the buzz of voices; and Herbert

thought of a certain table, and asked Seaton if his old place were vacant.

"Yes, indeed," was the reply, "and there is one for Mr. Ramsay, too. Two men, or rather two youths, went away yesterday. One of the clerks in the hotel comes from Machiasport; and, at my instigation, he worked upon their feelings to such an extent about an athletic tournament to be held there, that they started yesterday for the favored spot. 'I'm sure they'll not be missed.'"

"That last phrase sounds familiar," said Herbert. "What does it cost in Bar Harbor to club a man who quotes from Gilbert's librettos?"

"I can compose good poetry myself, young fellow. Shall I give you a specimen?"

"Seaton," said Herbert, "you spoke just now of a fine lunch awaiting us. Let us have that first, and

'Then may we sing like Theocritus or Virgil,
Then may we each make a metrical essay,
But verse just now, I must protest and urge, ill
Fits a digestion by travel led astray.'

"Well said," replied his friend. "A truce then to quotations. *Allons dîner*," but, all the same, as they entered the restaurant, he was humming with a mischievously innocent air,

"'Where, oh where, shall I earliest meet her?
What are the words that she first will say?'"

When they were sitting, after lunch, cigars in mouth and *demi-tasses* before them, he quietly remarked,

"By the way, Herbert, I saw a friend of yours this morning, and told her you were coming. It was Miss Helen Thurston. She said she was very glad, and hoped she would soon see you. Ten to one she is on the hotel veranda now. Let us go over there, and you can speak to her. Come along."

"Is she not pre-occupied with the French count?" asked Somers, a little bitterly.

"Confound the French count," ejaculated Seaton. "Has the French count the monopoly of the American queen (for is she not a daughter of the people, and are not these people sovereigns)? Come along, I say, and you too, Mr. Ramsay."

They crossed the street and mounted the steps of the wide veranda. It was now filled as never before, for the place was at its fullest; and the noise of voices was as the roar of a cataract. Of all in the great assemblage, young and happy, gay and pleasure-seeking, in the hey-day of life, Herbert had eyes for but one, and in a few moments he saw her! In all the intervals of the duties absorbing him in his absence from Bar Harbor his thoughts had turned to her, and would have done so in spite of himself. Her picture, as memory painted it, had been always in his heart; and now, as he looked at her, he said it had not half done her justice. How could it have done so? he asked himself. How could he have thought that he half appreciated her rare beauty, bursting upon him as he now saw her? Often, when parted from her, he had thought of the

epigrammatic saying of a wise friend, to the effect that if one were doubtful as to his or her regard for another, it should be put to the simple and unerring test of the effect of separation. Against his will he had been compelled to part, temporarily, from this beautiful girl who had made so deep an impression upon him ; returning, he found that he loved her more than before. Whatever else in the world might be true, there was no room for doubt on that point. As she sat there in the large chair, a little apart from the rest—sat there unconscious of his approach—all else in the universe was of no moment, for here was his fate.

As he came near her, a curious thing happened. Seaton was on one side of him, Ramsay on the other ; and they were threading their way through the crowd. Suddenly they came upon the count. He saw Herbert first, then Seaton. His face contracted almost into a scowl, and his hand went quickly to his moustache, but gave it not a single twirl ; for at that moment a movement of the crowd brought Ramsay in sight. In an instant the whole expression of the Frenchman changed, a look of utter consternation came over his face, his lips parted nervously, he turned on his heel, passed through one of the long windows, open to the ground, and was gone.

Ramsay, who had not seen him and was all unconscious of the effect of his appearance, walked calmly on. Seaton chuckled, and Somers, with quick step, made his way to Helen's side. She

turned her head just as he was close by her, and saw him. There was an undoubted suggestion of pleasure in the surprised eyes and the heightened color, but she was a high-spirited and clever girl, and equal to emergencies. She greeted him very sweetly, and was quite at her ease in an instant; though she could not have failed to see the eager animation in his eyes. He drew a chair near her and took his seat thereon.

"I am delighted to see you, Miss Thurston," said he. "It seems a long time since I went away from Bar Harbor."

"Thank you," said she. "I am sure you must be pleased to meet all your friends here again; and then, from all accounts, you have participated in very exciting scenes since we said good-bye. And, do you know, I never thanked you for those beautiful roses you gave me."

Herbert, with a little gesture, expressed his idea of the trifling value of the flowers. He was greatly elated, and his courage was rising.

"I remember that night perfectly, and all that happened," said he. "I was bold enough to ask you to keep a corner in your memory for me. I wonder if you did reserve even the tiniest little one."

Helen was not a belle for nothing; and sweet speeches, and compliments and adulation were common, every-day matters to her; but she knew, too, the ring of the true metal. This was no carpet knight, no squire of dames, at her side now, but a

strong man, thoroughly in earnest, whose heart was in his words. Perhaps (who but herself could tell?) she might have sometimes contrasted this stout-hearted, red-blooded, stalwart fellow with the average men of society who formed part of her court wherever she went; perhaps have thought that if her heart went out to any one, it would be to just such a man as this; but then she had known other fine fellows, and kept herself unmoved by the tender passion. Would it be different now? Then she remembered who had been her shadow for weeks—remembered with a sort of shudder, and looked up as if seeking protection.

“Oh, yes,” she said, in her pretty, frank way. “I remembered you and kept myself informed of what you were about. I think it must be grand to have such man’s work to do. Poor women have no opportunities of that sort. I suppose we ought to sit at home and weep, like those in the ‘Three Fishers,’ when such things are in progress. I would have liked to see you all there; with the mob raging about you and the guns ready, and—” she stopped with a vivid blush and looked down for a moment.

“I am glad you did not see it,” said Herbert. “It was not a nice sight.”

“My uncle wrote me about it,” said she, “and how splendidly you helped him. Oh! thank you so very, very much.”

The situation was trying for Herbert; this lovely girl, in her sudden excitement, looking at him with **her big red-brown eyes**, forgetful of French counts

and their baneful spells, and thanking him thus heartily.

"I beg you to say no more about that, dear Miss Thurston," said he. "When any one near and dear to you is concerned you must 'ask me something harder.' But you remind me that I have some parcels for you. I will bring them as soon as I get my trunks."

Helen thanked him, and sat silent for a few minutes. Then she looked at him from under her long lashes, and said,

"My uncle seems to have taken a great fancy to you."

Herbert bowed low. "I am specially glad of that, for obvious reasons," he replied. "He was very good to me, and I thought him very genial and charming."

"Shall you be able to remain some time in Bar Harbor?"

"I came here in the hope of doing so, and the beginning of my stay has been so very pleasant that I would fain dismiss from my mind the suggestion of any end thereto."

"The ending of pleasant things is always disagreeable," said Helen, making a move to rise. "And, *apropos* of that, I have been paying no heed for some time to the gestures of my aunt, which mean that if I do not leave you this instant and go to drive with her, I shall rue it; so good-bye for the present, Mr. Somers. Do not forget to bring me my presents."

"May I call and deliver them at your cottage this evening?"

"This evening? By all means. Come early, and we can go to the hop afterward." She had risen as she spoke, and now, with a smile and a little bow, she was off. Herbert resumed his seat for a few moments, and was joined by Seaton, who handed him a cigar.

"Your friend Ramsay has found *his* best girl," said he. "She saw him coming and blushed, did Miss Esther Farley—pretty creature, by the bye, but too much like Ramsay, high-strung, nervous, and emotional, to be a suitable companion for him. See the expression on both their faces now. You could fancy them discussing their favorite form of martyrdom."

"Ramsay is a very fine fellow, my dear Seaton," said Herbert.

"Q. E. D.," said Seaton, "in the first place, by his being your friend (don't mention it), and in the second, by his having behaved so well when with you in the riots. For just this reason, and also because Miss Farley is a fine girl, each should have a complement in some more wholesome, hearty, vigorous personality. The chances are that she *aimera* and he *se laissera aimer*. Then he will go off on some crank crusade or other—no, I mean it, —and she will wear her heart out. Here, ask Professor W——, of your old medical school. I saw him looking at Ramsay when we were talking just now. Professor, will you have a cigar? All right;

I will give you a good one. . You know Mr. Somers, do you not? By the way, is it a fact that some one used those same words, 'Professor, will you take a cigar?' at Parker's, in Boston, and nineteen respectable gentlemen rose and said, 'Thank you, I don't mind if I do'? But, to be serious, I was telling Somers that you were observing his friend Ramsay. Interesting personality, is it not?"

"Interesting, yes," said the professor, in his low, measured tones, "sadly interesting. His is one of those organizations, I am sure, where the soul is wearing out the body. I should say that he could not live long, and might go off very quickly. If he had some object in life to gain which was very dear to him, I can imagine his living to finish it, and then dying, worn out. Mr. Somers, we have heard much of you lately. You had a very difficult task before you. I congratulate you on its accomplishment."

"Yes, professor," said Seaton, "he has improved on your Massachusetts motto. Not only did he seek, but he has found *placidam sub libertate quietem*."

CHAPTER X.

The Count Meets Some Old Acquaintances.

"HERBERT," said Seaton, the day after that of the former's arrival, "we have had so much to occupy us that I have not told you about the French count. He was on the veranda when we went thither yesterday; and, when he saw you and me, he turned, as the 'funny man' in the paper says, 'black with suppressed gratitude.' Just then, Ramsay hove in sight, and Monsieur changed from black to green, and took himself off in a jiffy. A man who met him at dinner at one of the cottages says he was silent and glum, and so rude as almost to disaffect even the lion-hunting hostess. I met our journalist friend this morning, and he told me he knew all about it, and tried to interview him, an hour ago—think what cheek!—but 'the Johnny Crapeau got off a lot of French cuss-words, and sailed in the *Silver Star* for Southwest Harbor.'"

"Good riddance," said Herbert. "Let us go to the hotel for our mail. I expect some letters."

There were some, to be sure, and for both men; and they sat on the side piazza to peruse them. Somers took up one with a Colorado post-mark, and read it with interest, and a smile on his face.

"Seaton," said he, "Orson is coming to find Valentine; in other words, my old 'pard,' as he calls himself, my mountain Mentor, my good friend Connor, a man of the Sierras, is on his way hither from Colorado. He has made a 'strike' on one of our claims, and has been in New York to sell it. Thence he is coming to Bar Harbor to see me—bless his big heart!"

"*Et moi aussi,*" said Seaton. "I, too, am not friendless nor unexpectant of a visitor, although of a different stamp. You remember Warrington, who was *attaché* to the British Legation in Vienna, when we were chums in the Ringstrasse? He is in Washington, and wants to come hither about the time that your backwoodsman should arrive. They will make excellent foils for one another. Can't you imagine them at first sight? the one with his glass in his eye, his faultless mien, the struggle with himself not to say 'most extraordinary, don't you know?' and the other ——"

"Big, and deep-voiced, and hearty, and good-natured," said Herbert. "They are productions of different civilizations, but both capital fellows."

While they spoke, something novel was progressing in the village street in front of them. Light wooden arches had been erected at intervals, and slender iron rods, with hooks at the end, suspended therefrom. On these hooks, again, hung small rings. A number of youths, fairly well mounted, and armed with wooden lances, strongly suggesting sharpened broomsticks, were galloping in turn under these

arches, and endeavoring to send the lances through the rings, and carry them off.

"What on earth is that performance?" asked Somers.

"Modern chivalry," replied Seaton. "A tournament after the manner of King Arthur, and Lancelot, and the Knights of the Round Table, if you please. The one who wins is entitled to crown some girl Queen of Love and Beauty. Don't smile. That is much better than capsizing her in a canoe."

"Of course," said Somers. "Far be it from me to deride such deeds of prowess. Do you happen to know if the noble count will be among the competitors?"

"I have not seen him practising," said Seaton; "and then this absence does not look like it. I see young Browning riding quite well. His winning would make Carrie Westbrook queen, and she would indeed be a right pretty one. She has many loyal subjects already, and he is the most devoted of all. I rather think that he is willing, and it is she who has not made up her mind. Perhaps she has taken a fancy to some of the superior golden youths of Newport."

"A handsome girl, as I remember her."

"*Par exemple*, and very sweet and clever. With a single exception, I think her the most noticeable all-round young beauty in Bar Harbor. Has a charming mother, too. Do you know her?"

"I think not."

"You can see where Carrie gets her good looks.

She is not as bright yet as her mother. The latter said a capital thing the other day. A nephew of her late husband came up here for a visit, and she begged him to cut it short and go away. 'If you stay here, Charley,' said she, 'you will spoil both our chances. Some people think you are my husband, and that ruins *you*; others are reminded that you are my nephew, and that ruins *me*.'

"Good," said Herbert, "I should like to meet her. By the way, is not that our journalistic friend coming this way? Yes, he wants to speak to us. Good morning."

"Good morning, gentlemen," said the reporter. "I am just back from Southwest Harbor, where I went to find the count. I tried on an interview, but I got badly left. However, I found out from other people that he is coming over here again tomorrow morning. Do you mind telling me if you know why he took himself off so quickly when he saw your friend—the gentleman with the pale face and bright eyes?"

"Oh! you noticed that, did you?" asked Seaton.

"Well, I should smile. I've shadowed him just like a detective."

"Mr. Ramsay does not know why he should have disappeared at his approach. I asked him. But, by the bye, Herbert, did I mention the count's name to Ramsay? I think not."

"No, you only said 'a man calling himself a French nobleman'; then we were interrupted."

"Could I see Mr. Ramsay?" asked the young man.

"By and bye, I dare say, and very easily," replied Seaton, "but the young ladies have carried him off this forenoon. Try him later."

"Thanks, I will. Now I must get the names of these knights. Good morning."

"That young fellow could tell us some curious things about the little follies and vanities of people you and I know very well," said Seaton. "What do you say to his overhearing some verbal abuse of himself, and the press generally, from persons here who had not only asked him to mention them, but offered to pay him for so doing?"

"I dare say. I wonder if the count distributed any francs in the direction of notoriety."

"It is only poor Americans who have to pay for that when they want it. The foreigner is allowed free advertising to any extent."

"I do not know why," said Herbert, "but I have an idea that, in some way or other, the count is about to come to grief."

The rest of the day and evening passed pleasantly. Herbert again met Helen on the veranda after supper; he danced with her at the hop; and he escorted her home, much to his delight.

It was early next morning that there was brought to him the plain card of

" JUDGE CONNOR,
LEADVILLE,
COLORADO."

In a few minutes he was shaking the hand of a

tall, straight, powerfully-built man of about fifty-five, and of very marked appearance. His eyes were steel-gray, but a soft light came in them, and his rather sober face took on an expression of the heartiest kindness, when he was greeting his friend. He was dressed in a black frock coat and trousers of a somewhat stiff cut, and wore a large felt hat. For long hours the two men talked together, and it was nearly afternoon when Herbert remembered the tournament, and told the judge he must go with him to see it. They dined together, and found places from which they could witness the sport. The youths who were to contend were now arrayed in gay attire and mounted for the fray. The judges and a grand marshal were on an elevated platform, and the latter functionary made an elaborate address in opening the ceremonies. About this speech there was a tone of subtle levity which the judge did not comprehend. He took the whole thing seriously, and, although he pronounced the orator a "daisy" speaker, and wished he would go to Leadville, and work in the political campaign, and "sling eloquence to the boys," he took exception to some of his statements. When this grand marshal, with sonorous voice and wealth of gesture, declared that chivalry, discredited amid the sordid pursuits of a material age in the great haunts of men, had found a home at Bar Harbor, and that one who gazed upon the noble countenances of these gallant knights (all looked sheepish, and several were blushing violently) could readily know that they

would never falter in the pursuit of honor and glory, the judge, with a certain cynicism, declared that he would like to see them "tackle a good, lively *bronco*, or cinch up a healthy mule." Nevertheless, he entered with zest into the sport, and bestowed his hearty plaudits on those who rode well.

By the force of natural attraction, Herbert had drifted, drawing the judge with him, to where Helen Thurston sat, charmingly dressed and looking her loveliest. Connor gazed intently at her.

"Who is that lady?" he asked. "I could swear I'd seen her before."

"Not in the mountains, I should say," replied Herbert. "I will present you, and you can ask her." He did so, and had no cause to be ashamed of the native courtesy with which the "Judge" acknowledged the young lady's pretty salutation. He said but little, but in his look, as he sat near her while she and Herbert talked, there was a curious blending of honest admiration and perplexity, as if some fugitive likeness or memory still baffled him. A long time had passed when Herbert looked at his watch, and cried out,

"Six o'clock, and I promised to make a call with Seaton, and then go with him to the boat to meet a friend. I would much rather stay here," and he looked as if he meant what he said. "Connor," he went on, "if you will go to the hotel, when you are ready, I will meet you there early in the evening." His friend seemed uncertain for a moment whether to go or stay, but Miss Thurston said, with animation,

"If you are not engaged, Mr. Connor, I should like to ask you something about Colorado."

He at once took his seat again, and Herbert bade them good-bye, and went away. Meeting Seaton, he made the call with him, accompanied him to the wharf, and waited for the steamer. Soon she came, and with the very last of the passengers appeared one of those prim, precise, but very refined Englishmen, whom one sees so often in Europe; faultlessly neat in attire, silent and unemotional, who scorn the *coupé-lits*, and sit up all night in railway carriages, with rugs carefully folded over their knees.

"There he is, Herbert," laughingly cried Seaton, "the same as he always was and always will be. Could one mistake him for anything but a British diplomatist? How are you, my dear Warrington?"

The Englishman smiled placidly and extended his hand.

"Delighted to meet you again, I am sure," said he. "Eh? surely this is Somers, too. Most extraordinary, don't you know; never expected to see you. Thought you were engineering, and all that sort of thing—so some American fellows, that I met, told me. How are you? Oh! I say" (to the servant who followed with his hand-bag and rug), "Johnson, have you the brasses for the luggage?"

When Herbert had walked to the hotel with his two friends, and as he stepped on the veranda, he encountered Connor, who had evidently been on the lookout for him, and was eager to say something.

Drawing him to a quiet corner, the judge relieved his mind without delay.

"Captain Herbert," said he, "I've struck a rich lead in this place, and, let alone the pleasure of seeing you, I wouldn't wonder if it was my call to do some good by coming here; to block a little game that isn't on the square. You saw me looking at that sweet young girl. It wasn't only because she was as pretty as they make them—I never saw a prettier one—but because I couldn't get over the idea that I'd seen her before. When you went away, she began to talk to me; kind of hesitating-like—as if she had something on her mind; and it wasn't three minutes before I found out why her face had seemed so natural to me. It was her brother that I knew, and blamed if I ever saw such a likeness. Don't you remember young Thurston from New York, that was in Colorado last April? No? Oh! now I recollect. That was when you went East. Well, you never saw a finer young fellow; lots of sand, and real good-appearing and pleasant. All the boys thought the world of him. He had some money from his friends at home to put into a mine, and he was looking about to find a good one. Now, you know, that ain't the easiest thing in the world, even for an old hand; and the youngster struck a set of sharps who sold him a claim with a kind of risky title; so, when some other sharps that were pards of theirs came along and jumped it, he couldn't hold his rights in the courts. Well, he was a real proud, high-spirited boy, and he

couldn't bear the idea of having lost his friends' money, so he put out for the Gunnison country. Why, didn't you hear about it? I don't believe things would have gone so if I'd been in Leadville, but I was down at Denver. When I came back, I heard about it, and I got some of the boys together, and we spotted the whole outfit of claim-jumpers, and gave them till sunset to get out of the place. There was a fellow stopping at the hotel and passing himself off for a French swell, and that afternoon one of the gang gave him clean away to me, and let on that he had put the whole job up on the young man, while pretending to be his friend; and found the money for the lawyers, and all. Well, Tom Prentiss and I went up to the hotel, and called out this man—the Chevalier something or other he called himself—and we told him the place would be just red-hot for him in about two hours. He began to bluster, but Tom got up from his chair and said there were two or three of the boys belonging to the Miners' Union in the bar-room, and he would like to introduce them to him. Then he turned pale, and went out and got Joe Smith to hitch up and take him out of town in less than an hour; and that was the last that was seen of *him* in Leadville. Now it seems he came East, and must have met another Frenchman who was his friend, and told him a pack of lies about the young fellow—John was his name. I suppose it was this other man that came to Mount Desert and met John's sister, and said her brother had been doing wrong and dis-

gracing himself, and that no one knew it but him ; and I allow he kept the poor little girl in a state of fright, and kind of got an influence over her through having a secret with her, and she afraid he'd let on, don't you see? She was plucky, too, and she wanted to find out more, and so she began to question me, and gave the whole thing away, bit by bit, poor little thing ! It didn't take me long to set her right, and you'd ought to have seen the light come to her eyes, and the color to her cheeks ; and she shook my hand and thanked me—bless her sweet heart ! But I say, Captain Herbert, I've been thinking that I'd like to run across that Frenchman, sort of accidentally-like," and the gray eyes began to look steely. "He must be the worst sort of a pill. She said he had gone away somewhere."

The good fellow had been so absorbed in his story that he had not noticed the varying expressions on his companion's face. When he stopped, the latter asked, "What was the chevalier like?"

"He was short, with dark hair, and small, bright eyes, and a moustache curling over his beard in a queer way."

"Connor," said Herbert hastily, "you have done a good afternoon's work. Now just excuse me for to-night. I have some business to which I must attend. We will breakfast together to-morrow morning."

He went at once to seek Seaton, whom he found sitting with Warrington.

"Deuced jolly place, don't you know," the latter

was saying, "and no end of awfully pretty girls. I cawn't say much for the table, though—most extraordinary dinner that we had to-day, and at about my usual breakfast hour. I say, Seaton, old man, I don't mind so much just now, because I'm *banting*. Deuced bore for me, too."

"Warrington," said Herbert, "you were attached to the British Legation in Paris, a long time, some years ago, were you not?"

"Yes, deuced long time—too long for my comfort. I was there during the siege."

"And you knew most of the officials in the Foreign Office, did you not?"

"Of course."

"Was the Count de Meaubré there?"

"Yes, a long while. Knew him well. Deuced good fellow. Very fond of what he called '*le sport*.' Started a four-in-hand, and came to grief in the Bois the first time he tried to drive it. But have you not seen him in America? I heard he crossed last year, and went to the West to shoot."

"Do you mind describing his appearance?"

"That is not difficult, for you would pick him out in any crowd. He is very unlike the typical Frenchman; is over six feet in height, and very blonde."

"Indeed!" said Herbert. "Then, perhaps, my dear Warrington, you would not mind, to oblige me, taking the trouble of looking at a certain man to-morrow, and stating whether or not he is the count?"

"Eh! what? Is he here?"

"There is some one here who calls himself the

count, but he hardly answers to your description. It will be a great favor if you will set the matter at rest to-morrow."

"Delighted to oblige you, I am sure."

"Thanks," said Herbert. "I shall depend upon you. *Au revoir*," and he went to find Edgar Ramsay, who was sitting on the cottage piazza. His face lighted up as he saw his friend.

"Herbert," said he, "art is long, and time is fleeting. Can we not begin our search?"

"Yes, my dear fellow, very soon now, and with all my heart. I have only one thing to do, before I place myself at your disposal, and you can perhaps aid me in that. Did you ever meet a Count de Meaubré in Paris?"

"Yes, indeed, I know him well. Why, I knew him when he was in this country, and crossed in the same steamer going back."

"Was he a tall, blonde man?"

"Very tall and very blonde."

"Then, my dear Edgar, ten minutes of your time to-morrow can be most usefully employed. I will let you know about the matter."

Hurrying again to the hotel, Herbert met the reporter, who accosted him eagerly.

"He's come," said he. "Arrived in the *Cimbria* to-night. Has taken a room over the restaurant, and gone out to dine at one of the cottages. Is like a bear with a sore head, and I couldn't get a word out of him."

"Thank you for all the information you have

given me," said Herbert. "Perhaps I shall have some to give you in return to-morrow. Have a cigar? You will find that a good one."

"That I shall," said the young fellow, "and I know too much to waste it in the wind. I'll enjoy it by and by, and try to make the hotel clerk think it's the kind I smoke all the time. Thank you, and good night."

The Count de Meaubré rose late next morning, and took a glass of *vermouth* before he made his careful toilet. While he was dressing, he looked out of the window and saw a man pacing slowly on the sidewalk in front of the building. It was the nearest approach which Bar Harbor afforded to what in Paris he would have called a *sergent de ville*; and the count wondered what business he had on hand. Then he finished his preparations for breakfast and was leaving his room, when he met Herbert Somers face to face.

"Count," said the latter, in a firm and decided voice, "you will be glad to learn that some old acquaintances of yours have arrived at Bar Harbor, and would like very much to meet you. They are in this room opposite, and I hope you will come in and see them."

The count hesitated, twirled his moustache, and looked about him. Herbert's eyes were fixed on his face; and, without seeming to do so, he barred the Frenchman's way to the stairs.

"Who are they?" he asked, sullenly. "I know them not; *mais, c'est égal*. I will see for myself."

He pushed open the door, which stood ajar, and entered the room. Here he saw Warrington, Seaton and several other men seated.

"Mr. Warrington," asked Herbert, "do you not know the Count de Meaubré?"

Warrington's manner showed the struggle in his mind between the desire to meet the emergency, and his constitutional aversion to a "scene," or anything unconventional. The former gained the upper hand in a few seconds, and he answered with a frigid dignity:

"There is but one Count de Meaubré, and this gentleman is not he. I do not know him at all."

"That is my loss," said the *soi-disant* count, "but, while I regret the fact, I cannot help it. I wish you good morning, gentlemen."

He was turning to go out when he was confronted by the judge, who had come in behind him. Connor closed the door and set his back against it. He seemed to tower inches above his height, and there was more of the steely glint in his eyes, but the only other evidences of excitement on his part were a curious dropping of his ordinary careful mode of speaking, and a return to the dialect of the miner and the ranchman.

"I heard this yere gentleman say he didn't know yer," said he, "but I do, only that wasn't your name in Colorado. The Chevalier of something or other it was out there, and I suppose ye've had more names than that. Now, just you stand still where you are till I've got through talking. I don't

want to make no disturbance, but it's hard work to keep my hands off you when I think of all the wickedness that you've been into. Gentlemen, I ain't got no call to make remarks, but it kind o' strikes me that if we had a pretty place like this out in the mountains, an' our wives and daughters was there, in and out, sort of familiar like, every day, and men come along and wanted to go in, the boys would know who they were, and where they come from. Now I've told Captain Somers here some of the things that this man has been doin', but even he don't know the half of 'em. It ain't a pretty story, and I've got no call to tell it here, but they'd make short work of him if they had him in Leadville; and, what's more, there's plenty of warrants out for him. I knew him as soon as I got a sight of him last night, and my first idee was to have him took up, and telegraph to our sheriff; and I guess the boys will kind o' think I've gone back on 'em because I didn't; but I've been thinkin' the matter over, and how I wouldn't like to make no disturbance here where things is so pleasant, nor to stir up bad feelin'. So, young feller, I'll jest give yer one more show. You pack your things and light out of this. There's a constable on the sidewalk, and he'll jest keep yer in sight until ye're safe aboard the boat. If I ever set eyes on yer again, it'll be the worse for yer, as sure as my name is John Connor. **GIT!**" He stepped aside and opened the door. The Frenchman had stood perfectly still while he was speaking, and turned white - now he walked out

without a word. Connor closed the door hastily; then shrugged his shoulders and drew a long breath.

"Talking so much makes my throat dry," said he. "Would you gentlemen join me in a little refreshment? What! Can't get none in Bar Harbor? That's mighty rough."

Edgar Ramsay had sat quietly in the room. Now he spoke, and there was a slight flush on his cheek as he did so.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I have been trying to think who that man was, and where I had seen him. Now I remember perfectly, and he must have known me. He was the valet of the Count de Meaubré, and an extremely clever and accomplished fellow, but an arrant rascal. The count left him here when he sailed for France last year. He told me the man was so useful ('he knows much more than I do, *mon ami*,' said he to me) that he had put up with much; but finally they had agreed to part. He thought that, in this land of equality, the fellow might make a career."

"Seaton," asked Herbert, "*what* will Mrs. Renton say?"

"Don't ask me," replied Seaton; "I must think of myself. I boasted that I knew something of the world, but he was too much for me."

"Well," said the judge, "he was an everlasting mean cuss, but blame me if he warn't smart. Now, I'll tell you one thing; and that is that he's feeling precious ugly now. We've given him the grand bounce for this time, but he'll do his level best to

get square with some or all of us, and don't you forget it! If this was a mining camp, you fellows would want to go well heeled."

"But, I say," said Warrington, "what the deuce happens to a fellow when he's 'well heeled,' as you call it? Most extraordinary American expression, don't you know?"

"It is the condition of a man who comes out of the hotel in New York and asks where he can find buffaloes to shoot, as one of your countrymen did a while ago," said Herbert. "It means well armed and well equipped."

"Must be a deuced bore, don't you know, for one to have to go about one's business armed to the teeth, and all that sort of thing."

"Well," said the judge, reflectively, "I don't know so much about it's being a bore, but I've seen the time, more'n once, when having a good six-shooter in my hip pocket was worth more to me than the best mine in Leadville would have been."

"Case of road agents, judge?" asked Seaton.

"No," replied the judge. "Tain't most always you can get the drop on a road agent if he understands his business. I've only known two cases, in all the years I've lived in the mountains, when the boys got away with the real genuine kind of road agents."

"What were those?" asked Seaton.

"Well, one was on the Mosquito Pass, going up, on the east side. The boys had a six-mule wagon, open, and Jim Boyle was on the front seat. He'd

allowed they might strike some agents, and was sort of expecting of 'em; and, sure enough, before they came to the top, a man jumped from behind a rock and held 'em up. And Jim he says, kind of sarcastic like, that any man could hold up a wagon 'with three other men behind ye, thar,' he yelled, throwing out his left hand and pointing over the cuss's shoulder. He couldn't help turning his head, and that was all, because, you see, Jim had his six-shooter in his right hand, and he was mighty quick on the trigger. The other case was darned curious. It was a long while ago, down on the Divide, between Denver and Colorado City. That time the fellow got 'em out of the stage and had 'em sitting on a log, with their hands up, and he a-holding two revolvers a-pointing at 'em, while the second man had his back turned. There was a young chap in the party, just about the look and build of Captain Herbert here, and just as quick and strong as he could be; and, you see, he was everlastingly riled at being in such a fix. So he set his great muscles, and pulled himself together, and then, as quick as a panther, made one spring and was under the fellow's arms and throwed him; and the same minute one of his pards shot the other man as dead as Julius Cæsar."

There were various comments, from the interested listeners, on the judge's story. Warrington stared at him for some minutes with his glass in his eye, and then said:

"Most extraordinary tale, by Jove!"

CHAPTER XI.

Sought and Found.

WHEN Herbert left the room in which the curious scene described in the last chapter had been enacted, he found the reporter waiting outside and eager for information. Taking him to his cottage, he gave him the story, only asking that he himself should look over the letter and special despatch before they were sent.

Like almost all of his kind when treated with kindness and ordinary tact, the young fellow was perfectly loyal, and he sent matter which was correct and wholly unobjectionable. As, in addition to giving him the count's story at first hand, Herbert persuaded the judge to allow himself to be "interviewed," and to give out many marvellous Western narratives, it was a great occasion for the journalist, and gained him both fame and promotion. Later, Herbert met Connor, who looked at him with a twinkle in his eye.

"Captain Herbert," said he, "I told the young lady last night that I'd telegraph to Leadville about her brother, and that I'd call this afternoon and let her know what I heard. I got an answer this morning from Prentiss, saying the young fellow was on his way from the Gunnison. Now, you see,

Mr. Seaton has asked me to drive with him, and I thought perhaps you'd take the trouble to go up in my place and give the message."

Of course, Herbert went, and he had a charming reception. His task was a little delicate, for he did not know at first how much Helen had heard of the sudden coming to grief of the count. Finally, ascertaining that she was ignorant of the affair, he told her simply that he had turned out an impostor and would not be seen again. Helen colored and sat with downcast eyes for a few moments. At last she spoke :

"I do not quite understand, Mr. Somers. Is it possible that this very man is the one who was the enemy of my brother—this man whom I have known here, and who has been in my company?"

"Dear Miss Helen," said Herbert, "he undoubtedly was the man ; but he deceived every one, even my clever friend Seaton. I beg you not to reproach yourself nor to think more of the matter. It is all past history now."

Helen was greatly agitated, and Herbert began to feel that he was in the way. He would have given all the world for the right to console the young beauty ; but, now that the evil genius had been removed, he found a new diffidence and distrust of himself gaining possession of him ; so he did the proper thing under the circumstances, rose, and stood, with hat in hand, ready to go. Helen made an effort to appear at her ease, and Herbert thought he never saw her look prettier than when she gave

him her hand, cordially, and trying to smile, but blushing and greatly agitated.

"I can never thank you enough for your kindness, Mr. Somers," said she, "and for the part I am sure you have taken in trying to help me, and the capital news you have brought about my brother. You must thank the good judge, too. I hope you will come and see me to-morrow. I suppose I am weak and silly, but I confess I am rather overcome by what has happened."

"The most natural thing in the world," said Herbert. "No one could help it; but I am sure you will feel differently in a short time; so I beg you to borrow no trouble. I will gladly call again to see you, but not to-morrow, I fear; for I have promised to gratify my friend Ramsay by going with him on an expedition, and I dare say we shall be late in returning. Good-bye."

That evening there were many curious eyes on the watch for Helen Thurston; for the news of the count's downfall had spread like wild-fire, and every one wanted to know how she would appear, in view of the intimacy which was supposed to prevail between them. If they expected her, however, to wear her heart on her sleeve, or show a sign of agitation, they knew little of her high spirit. She took tea at the cottage of a friend, and appeared later with the party at a hop, perfectly self-possessed. All the same, she did not close her eyes that night.

Herbert Somers had never seen his friend Ramsay in such an excited and expectant state of mind

as when they boarded a little steamer at the wharf next morning. He had a satchel slung over his shoulder and carried a large binocular; his face was pale as ever, but his eyes shone with almost unnatural brightness.

"Now, Edgar," said Herbert, "you must take things more easily, and not agitate yourself. You know I enter into your feelings of romantic interest and curiosity; and, although I may not go the full length with you, I shall do all in my power to help put your theories to the test and realize your hopes; but our friend, the judge, said of you last night, 'He's an all-fired nice young fellow, but he'd better keep cool and go slow.'"

"Herbert, you are a good friend," said Ramsay, "but you must let me have my way to-day. Remember that for months I have looked forward to this occasion. I am not like you. I have no engrossing duties in active life, and no share in affairs; and these fancies, as you call them, take the place of all such things with me, and interest me as much as your profession and your ambitions interest you."

"All right, old man," said Herbert, "lectures are over for to-day. I suppose we shall be off in a moment."

The little steamer threaded her way among the yachts and other craft, and ran out between the mainland and the Porcupine Islands. Ramsay took a chart from his satchel and spread it on a settee.

"I found out our course from the captain, early

this morning," said he. "See, here it is. In a few moments we shall reach the spot where, as I calculate, the vessel of La Saussaye, drifting from the neighborhood of Grand Menan, was when the fog lifted. But I forget; you do not know the whole story. I have brought the narrative of Captain de la Roche Guyon in my satchel, as well as Father Biard's, from the *Relations des Jésuites*. See, there is the 'rocky coast, rising at intervals into bold headlands, and elsewhere crowned with a growth of hardy green trees.' There, too, is the 'mighty mountain' which so interested poor Du Thet. Let me read you part of the narrative," and he did. Then he pointed out the various features of that part of the coast lying between Bar Harbor and the mouth of Somes's Sound; which, indeed, corresponded remarkably with the historic account of the voyage of the little French vessel. Schooner Head, Great Head and Otter Cliffs were all mentioned, and appeared in turn, just as to the travellers of nearly three hundred years before.

"See, Herbert," said Ramsay, "Green Mountain is now out of sight, just as they say it passed, to Du Thet's sorrow. Did you ever see anything more exact? And there are the 'green islands at the mouth of the Sound, and the open channels between them.'"

After stopping at Seal Cove, the *Silver Star* made her way towards North-east Harbor. As they approached it, Ramsay asked the captain if he had not been correctly informed that on the bluff at the

north of it a shell-heap had been found, indicating the site of an Indian village in the olden times.

"Yes," said the skipper, as he put his helm to port, "there was an old professor who came along with me a week ago, and spent a whole afternoon burrowing there. He said there was no question about it."

"Then, Herbert," said his friend triumphantly, "there can be no doubt whatever that North-east Harbor was the haven where they first landed, and set up their cross. There, where the captain says the shell-heap was found, was the village of Asticou, where Father Biard found him lying ill, and where he heard of the beautiful spot for their residence on the other side of the Sound. Why, it is all as plain as day. I do not see how there can have been any uncertainty about it."

"Probably there has been none, in reality," said Herbert; "but few have taken the trouble to look into the matter at all, and those few have gotten their information at second hand."

The steamer ran up to the dock at North-east Harbor, and Ramsay gazed about him with enthusiasm, trying to fix, in his fancy, the spot where the landing was made. Then the vessel stood across to South-west Harbor and soon made fast to the dock there. In the meantime, Ramsay had pointed out to Herbert, on the chart, the spot on which, he was assured, had stood Saint Sauveur. He had read to him, too, the description of the "green field sloping down to the water's edge and backed

by a battlement of rock to which clung some hardy trees."

"Now, my dear Herbert," said he, "the best authorities all agree that that place was just here" (pointing with his finger on the chart) "at Fernald's Point. We can either drive up this road which you see, or walk, or charter a boat."

They left the steamer and walked up the road from the dock, just as had the Methodist circuit preacher a few days before. At the hotel, Ramsay ordered a lunch put up; then he proposed to Herbert that they should charter a row-boat with a man to pull them.

"A boat, by all means, my dear Edgar," was the reply, "but I will do the rowing myself. If we should take an independent citizen with us, and he report the nature of our errand, and our doings at this point of yours, we should stand an excellent chance of being locked up as cranks. No; let me pull. It will do me good."

So, propelled by his strong arms, and with Ramsay sitting in the stern, the boat emerged from the Harbor and was soon nearing the open Sound.

"Reminds me of old days on the Charles River," said Herbert, as he settled to his work, "and the instructions in the rowing manual; 'The pressure of the heels on the stretcher, at the beginning of the stroke, should amount to a vicious intention of crumpling the wood to fragments.' There are good rowing lore and good English combined. However, when I had a great reputation as an oarsman,

I took the very safest course to preserve it, which was to give up rowing; and now, being out of training, I will, with your permission, take things very easy. We have the day before us."

Nevertheless, his strong stroke soon took the little boat into open water, where the beautiful northward view of the Sound opened before the eyes of the delighted Ramsay. This view was framed by a conical hill on the right, and a rough and rocky one at the left, and, with an exclamation of extreme satisfaction, Ramsay called Herbert's attention to a green slope, stretching from the foot of the latter to the water's edge. Two white houses with outbuildings stood thereon.

"Eureka!" cried Ramsay, "Saint Sauveur at last! Did you ever see a place which answered so completely to a description?"

A quarter of an hour's rowing brought them to a landing-place, where they hauled up the boat. There was, indeed, an almost startling reproduction of the scene of Father Biard's description; and, in fact, the only change in the appearance of the place since 1613, or 1614 at least, has been the erection of a few buildings. Even for an unimaginative person, it was not difficult to fancy these modern farm-houses gone, the cross again uplifted, the bells ringing the *Angelus*, and

"The swart commander in his leathern jerkin,
The priest in stole of snow."

No one who had observed Ramsay's appearance

could have doubted as to where his thoughts were. For him, the prosaic present was as if it had never been ; the mission of St. Sauveur was reconstructed, and Lay Brother Du Thet, pale and thin, but with the light of devotion and self-sacrifice in his eye, stood once more, with folded arms, gazing across the clear waters. Indeed, no one who had read the history of this rare character could have failed to see how the American layman of nine generations later unconsciously recalled him ; and that to labor and suffer, as did the pioneer of the cross in former days, this man lacked only the opportunity, not the will.

This view of the matter impressed itself forcibly upon even the strong, practical mind of Herbert Somers, and he began quite to enter into the spirit of the scene and the occasion. After a while Ramsay spoke.

"All that the hand of man could destroy has been gone for ages," said he, "and for nearly three hundred years the grass has grown green in summer and yellow in autumn over nameless and unhonored graves. Two souvenirs of the past, however, they could not obliterate. Let us search for the springs."

"All right ; but, my dear fellow, let me make a suggestion," said Herbert, wishing to temper the soberness of the situation by a little wholesome levity. "When the celebrated John Phoenix was making his survey from San Francisco to the Mission Dolores, and astronomical observations, trian-

gulations, and chain-measurements of the route had all failed, he stopped an omnibus, and learned from the driver that it was three miles long. Now, if there be any springs hereabouts, the bucolic citizens who dwell near by will surely know it. So, sir knight, I prithee peal a jubilee on yon knocker, and, when you have speech of the yeoman, speak him fair, and—ask him where in thunder he get his drinking water.”

An inquiry corresponding in spirit, if not in letter, to this suggestion, was quite effectual; and, following the directions given, the friends found, first, the westernmost spring, then the easternmost. At both points any curious visitor, in these days, can see them at the water's edge, and sometimes covered by the tide, but flowing, just as they flowed in the days of Biard and Du Thet, pure, clear, and ice-cold.

Ramsay was in great delight. He drank of both springs, but seemed to take special interest in the one at the east. He flung himself on the ground by it, and lay a long time looking at the blue sky.

“Let us take our lunch here,” he said, at last.

“Agreed,” said Herbert. “I was waiting for you to suggest something of the sort. I do not believe that your old French friends lived on air when they were here. Possibly Mr. Du Thet was satisfied with a *pâtage maigre*, but I warrant you the rest of them found room in the ship for a *chef*. What a pity it is that they did not stay long enough in these parts to leave a legacy of good cooking to their American

successors. How can a nation be really great when a large portion of its inhabitants are satisfied with fried beefsteak and saleratus bread, and eat pie for breakfast?"

It was an exquisite day, just such as befits August in those regions. The air was clear as crystal, there was a gentle breeze blowing, and the sun was just warm enough to suggest a midday *siesta*. The sound lay still before them, only one small schooner drifting idly by with the tide. On the slopes of the hills at the eastward the shadows swiftly chased each other, and the ear was soothed by the "summer sounds" of birds and insects. Herbert found himself falling into meditation and retrospect. He thought of days gone by—those of childhood and youth, his college years, his travels, his early labors at his profession. Then he lived over again the weeks just passed, his arrival at Mount Desert, the blissful days of his earliest acquaintance with Helen Thurston, his sudden departure. Then he saw once more the crowd of rioters surging about him, the serried ranks of the infantry, the gleam of the deadly barrels of the *mitrailleuses*, the stern face of the colonel, his lips just parting to give the word to fire. Then, in vivid contrast, he recalled his renewed intercourse with Helen; he saw the glories of her red-brown eyes as she looked at him on the hotel piazza; then the varying expression in them of agitation, apprehension, distress, almost pleading, when he last saw her and, with every fiber of his being, longed to

aid and comfort her. Then and there, indeed, under that matchless blue sky and amid those scenes of rare beauty, he knew that all his hopes and ambitions for the future lay in a gentle lady's keeping—were centered, once and forever, in the earnest, overmastering desire to win her love. Then there came to his mind the beautiful lines of poor Montrose, familiar in our ears as household words, yet ever fresh and beautiful :

“ He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That puts it not unto the touch
To win or lose it all.”

Ay! there was the rub. Dared he really, a new acquaintance, one out of many admirers, pitted against he knew not what worthier and braver men, stake all on a sudden disclosure of his feelings? Was there, in these sober, matter-of-fact days, no Delphic oracle to grant him some forecast of fate; no wise guide to show him the way to her heart of hearts; in all the wide world of nature, no talisman—?

“ Herbert,” said Ramsay, raising himself on his elbow, and looking at his friend with tender regard and wistful earnestness in his eyes, “ may I read to you? I have translated, from the quaint old French, some portions of the monograph on the Jesuit's Ring, of which I told you.”

“ Yes, my dear fellow, read it, by all means.”

And then, in his low, gentle tones, softly modu-

lated, full of feeling, and ever and anon sounding as if from afar, Ramsay read from his translations of the ancient chronicle. He had reproduced the spirit of the original and much of the old-time language, quite befitting the curious stories. With unquestioning faith, the chronicle recorded the finding, in early ages, of a stone which had come to its possessor, through his ancestry, from the great Temple at Jerusalem; then its insertion, after it had passed through the vicissitudes of many generations, in the ring. With faithful and laborious detail, it was told how the ancestor of Madame de Guercheville had enlisted under the standard of the great Count Raymond of Toulouse, Lord of Auvergne and Langue-doc, in the eleventh century, and with him reached Antioch, and passed through the sufferings which preceded the miraculous finding of the Holy Lance. In the final assault, too, on Jerusalem, he had behaved like a hero; he had heard the triumphant cry of Godfrey of Bouillon that St. George the Martyr was seen once more in the flesh, waving his sword on Mount Olivet; and then, at the head of his Provençal soldiers, he had scaled the ramparts. In the sack of the city which ensued, he saved the life of a prisoner; and the man, in the flush of his gratitude, gave him the ring, and told him its story.

"Thereafter," went on the chronicle, "was he most specially prospered and protected; as were those of his descendants who, nobly following his example, went to the Holy Land, and fought most valiantly for the Cross. Against them, ever fervent

in the line of their duty, was the lance of the Paynim couched in vain ; from them was the sword of the infidel turned aside. The pestilence which walketh in darkness passed them by ; a thousand fell at their side and ten thousand at their right hand, but it came not nigh them. The famous ring was well-known among the Saracens, and many desperate attempts were made, all in vain, to capture it. In those great and holy wars, therefore, this talisman played a most important part, and the last of the race of its owners who fought therein wore it on his finger as he stood by the death-bed of the great King Louis, on the African shore in 1270."

Then were its wanderings and fortunes epitomized up to the date of the " hundred years' war " and the final expulsion of the English from all the fair realm of France, excepting only Calais, in 1453. In these final struggles had there fallen one of the bravest and best of the race of La Roche Guyon ; and the ring came into the possession of a degenerate relative, who had shirked the hardships of war, and had come only to receive the body of his kinsman. Then was it lost by him, only to be found long after by one of the most gallant and debonair of the family, on his return from a term of brilliant military service.

" And to this true and brave knight," the story ran, " did its possession most truly bring the best of fortune. In time past had he dearly loved his fair neighbor, Marguerite de Monlyon, the fame of whose beauty and grace had gone out into all the

country round, and brought to her feet many and divers suitors. It is matter for conjecture that, ere he went to the wars to fight bravely for his country and his flag, he had feared that, among so many rivals, his own claims, modest as he estimated them, might be in danger of eclipse; nor was he really confident when he came home victorious and honored; nor even when the precious ring rested on his finger. Yet did it, in deed and in truth, bring him good fortune; which will the present writer maintain in the teeth of all who would fain deny it the possession of aught of power; for ere long he took heart of grace, and told the fair Marguerite of his love; and then did she, amid mingled smiles and blushes, confess that, from the first, her heart had been his."

Of the rest of the pretty story, Herbert heard but little. Indeed, in a few moments Ramsay stopped. For a while he seemed almost in a day-dream himself; then he rose to his feet and came close to his friend.

"Herbert," said he, "I claim the fulfilment of your promise. Come and look for the ring. Here, by this easternmost spring, was it lost in 1613. Here, by the same spring, shall it, I most truly believe, be found in 188—."

Herbert rose with an air of irresolution, which quickly passed away. He had determined to humor Edgar to any extent in what, at the moment, he thought a hopeless illusion; but the narrative and the curiously dramatic character of the situation

were not without their effect on even his sober judgment.

"I am at your service, Edgar," said he; "but tell me how, in the name of all that is rational, you are going to work to hunt for a bit of jewelry that has lain (even supposing that it really was lost) two and three-quarter centuries in such a place? Why, a needle in a haystack would be nothing to it."

Ramsay smiled. It was clear that no misgivings or lack of faith disturbed his serenity. He led the way to the vicinity of the spring, and pointed out a channel of dry pebbles running up the bank therefrom.

"Herbert," said he, "you must not test this affair by the hard canons of the every-day world. I wrote you from Paris that I had an insight into such things which was denied to most men; and I now repeat to you that one cannot have wandered as have I, in—nay, almost over the farther borders of—the debatable ground between this world and the next, without knowing more of what may seem mythical to you than do those whose only study is of things earthy. Now remember that the sailor lost the ring close to the easternmost spring; also that the 'debonair young cavalier' of four hundred years ago found it in just such a channel as this; then let me put the trial into your hands. Look here. Do you know what this is? You must have seen it in the mountains, and the mining regions."

He drew from his satchel a stout twig, shaped like a "Y."

"It is witch-hazel," said he; "take it in your hands."

"Why not use it yourself?" said Herbert.

"I! No, surely not. It is you, my dear fellow, to whom the fortune must come. Here, grasp it firmly by the two arms, thus."

Herbert hesitated no longer. His promise, his fondness for his friend, the renewed dramatic interest of the proposed trial, all influenced him. He took the twig in his firm grasp.

"Now," said Ramsay eagerly, "walk slowly along this channel, holding the end horizontal, and low down. Herbert did so, half amused, half curious. He walked deliberately, and had gone but a short distance when, to his extreme astonishment, the base of the twig began to turn downward, toward the ground. Hold it firmly as he would, he was powerless to prevent, and down the end went until it pointed perpendicularly at a certain spot in the dry, pebbly channel. Ramsay had watched the experiment with the utmost eagerness; now his face was flushed, and his eyes glistened.

"What did I tell you?" cried he. "Look! it has turned irresistibly; you cannot hold it. You surely know what that means; you have seen it in the mining regions; there, where it points, must be some precious metal. Oh! my dear fellow, search, search quickly!"

Eager as he was, he would not move a finger himself. Herbert dropped the twig, and began a quest among the pebbles. He raised them carefully, one

by one; his keen eyes searched every crevice exposed. When the first layer of stones was removed, he saw nothing.

"Try the twig again," cried Ramsay. Herbert seized it and held it firmly once more, and another time did the point turn downward toward the same place. With renewed and careful work, the second layer of pebbles was removed, exposing hard ground; and there, oxidized, blackened, crusted with its long burial, lay a ring! Herbert picked it up, and there shone out, in undimmed brilliancy, the beautiful color of the stone. Ramsay drew a long sigh, turned a little pale, and put his hand to his heart. His friend looked at him with alarm, but he recovered himself in a moment.

"It was only the excitement," said he, with a faint smile. "But think, Herbert, what wonderful fortune has been ours. I had, as I told you, a presentiment that it would be so, but it seems almost too good to be true." His voice seemed faint, and Herbert again looked at him with concern.

"I will rest awhile here," said he; "take good care of our wonderful find. We will carry it to Bar Harbor and have it cleansed. Will it go on your little finger? Of course not. I might have known."

"Lie down on the grass, my dear fellow, and keep quiet," said Herbert. "I will put the ring over my watch chain and in my pocket, and it will be quite safe. When you are better, I will row you back to Southwest Harbor, and no one need know that we have done anything more than indulge in a

genuine cockney picnic. Try to get forty winks, and fancy that the bells of the long-forgotten past are lulling you to slumber."

And Ramsay did finally doze for a short time; his face, in repose, showing deep lines and looking paler than ever. When he awoke, it was to see Herbert pacing the grass and smoking.

"All aboard!" cried he, cheerily, and then he sang:

" 'Why should we yet our sail unfurl?
There is not a breath the blue waves to curl;
But when the wind blows off the shore,
How gladly we'll rest the dripping oar.' "

They boarded the *Cimbria* when she touched at the wharf, and in an hour's time were again walking up the main street of Bar Harbor and toward their cottage. They stopped at a jeweler's and, making some trifling purchase, asked him how best to restore oxidized gold. Gaining the information, procuring the material, and going home, they could hardly wait for supper to be over before beginning operations with the ring. They told Seaton about it, but agreed that the finding had best, as far as most persons were concerned, remain a secret.

"We will tell them we found the site of Saint Sauveur," said Herbert to Seaton, "but we need not mention the ring. It would shock Edgar terribly to have his enthusiastic crusade discussed by rude and irreverent tongues, and I confess I should agree with him. But only think in what a state of

excitement our friend from Newspaper Row would be, had he the faintest suspicion of our achievements! I must tell him about the French colony, and our conclusive location of its site, so as to put him off the scent."

That evening Ramsay and Somers began their scientific treatment of the ring. This was very simple and wholly successful; and ere long it lay on the table before them, worn, battered, abraded, to be sure, but showing the pure gold of the quaint setting, and the stone shining as bright as ever.

"I could say the *Nunc Dimittis*," remarked Edgar, lying back in his chair with an air of deep content. "I have vindicated my reputation as an antiquarian; I have indulged one of my crazes; and I have, I am sure, brought to my best friend any good fortune which may follow the finding of the curious trinket. Remember, my dear fellow, that you found it, not I, and you are to hold it."

"Oh! Edgar," said Herbert, "you must keep it yourself. No one would have heard of it, much less dreamed of looking for it, but for you."

Ramsay looked at him with a world of good-will and affection shining in his deep-set eyes.

"You have always indulged me," said he, "and you must do so once more. So you will please put the ring on your watch chain again, and keep it there until—you have use for it. I am a little tired, my dear fellow, and am going to excuse myself. Oh! by the way, the history of the ring goes with it. Here it is. Good night."

Herbert sat for some time in a reverie, which must have been pleasant, to judge from the expression of his face; then he opened the carefully bound manuscript and began to read. He was quite absorbed when Seaton returned from a dinner party.

"Well, my modern Jason," said he, "where is the other Knight of the Golden Fleece?"

"He has retired," replied Herbert, "after doing a pretty and graceful thing, as he alone can do it." And he told his friend what had happened and showed him the ring.

"So you believe that this handsome bauble, lying here on a cottage table in Bar Harbor, Maine, United States of America, is any number of hundreds of years old, came down through a great many of them to a French priest, was worn by him on his missionary voyage, was lost at Saint Sauveur, and has lain there ever since?"

"I told you when I first arrived," said Herbert, "that Edgar had infected me with the antiquarian fever, and that I had begun to share his intense interest in the search for the ring. The occurrences of the last few weeks had driven these feelings away——"

"Yes," interrupted Seaton, with a twinkle in his eye; "by what the theologians call 'the expulsive power of a new affection'—I beg your pardon—go on."

"They came back when we reached the spot where, beyond all question, Saint Sauveur was. The influence of the place is very strong, and I felt less

foolish than you would suppose when Edgar shoved his witch-hazel rod into my hand."

"They really use it in the mining regions, do they not?"

"Yes; I have seen it tried, but always had an idea that there was some delusion about it. However, by some means or other, we found the ring, and here it is. Now, call me a crank if you like; I shall not resent it."

"Oh! my dear Herbert," said Seaton, "I shall not call you a crank at all. *Au contraire*, I think you a very sensible, hard-headed fellow. You reminded me, just now, of what you said when we first talked of this matter; so let me recall what I replied. I saw no reason then, and see none now, why the whole thing should not be true. Recollect that nothing is so illogical as unbelief, or more unsatisfactory; and the sceptic is always at a disadvantage, as compared with the faithful believer. Sir Humphry Davy, who was what you call yourself—a devotee of exact science—says that the Christian is infinitely better off than the infidel, because, even supposing the latter to turn out right in the end, the former has had through life the delight of an exalted hope—a hope 'which conjures up visions of amaranth and palm trees, where the sensualist and the sceptic view only gloom, decay, annihilation and despair.' So you may count my humble self among those who believe in the Jesuit's ring; and I am sure that few things in your life will afford you more pleasure than the pretty episode of its find-

ing, and the genuine devotion of Ramsay in giving it to you. Shake hands, and accept my hearty congratulations."

Later on, Herbert again suggested to Seaton that the young journalist would have been in clover could he have heard the story of the ring.

"Of course," said Seaton; "and, by the same token, I quite forgot to tell you that I saw him to-night, and he gave me a piece of news. Our friend, the valet, late count, who sailed hence on the *Mount Desert*, did *not* sail from Rockland to Boston in the *Penobscot*, with which she connected."

CHAPTER XII.

A Mount Desert Road Agent.

IT was late in the season, but Bar Harbor was at its very best. The hotels were still full, and the exodus had hardly begun. There was considerable talk about the verification, by Ramsay and Somers, of the site of Saint Sauveur, as set forth in a communication from the special correspondent. Helen Thurston expressed interest in it, but hardly as much as Esther Farley, with whom Ramsay spent a great part of his time, and who, it was clear, sympathized most deeply with him. Herbert Somers was at Helen's side as often as he dared be, but their relations were not the same as before. Her frank, easy manner and her pleasant *camaraderie* were gone, and she seemed rather shy with him, but as sweet as ever, and lovelier, if possible. On the whole, the world had dealt fairly with her in the matter of her acquaintance with the count. The truth was generally known, and she was thought to have behaved particularly well, and just, said her friends, as might have been expected in such a dear girl.

Young Browning had come into his millions, and was credited with having laid said millions, and

himself with them, at pretty Carrie Westbrook's feet; and it was thought she had accepted both, with the proviso that she should have a "cottage" at Newport. Seaton had been acting as *cicerone* for the judge, who enjoyed the seashore as only one does who has long lived far inland. Both were contemplating departure; one for his mountain home, the other for Newport, to visit a bachelor friend in his pleasant house on a shady street in that unique city.

It had been proposed that the judge and Seaton should both join a buck-board party for a Beech Hill and Echo Lake excursion, with dinner at Somesville included. This excursion was Mrs. Renton's farewell undertaking, and she had picked her twelve participants very carefully. Helen Thurston and Herbert Somers were invited, and Edgar Ramsay also; but the latter declared that the trip would fatigue him too much. Seaton accepted with pleasure, but the judge found the attractions of a fishing party too great, and excused himself.

"Why, madam," he said to Mrs. Renton, "I'd like nothing better than your good company, but there are lots that want to take my place; so I'll let 'em; because, you see, I've been in the mountains all my life, and driv' in mule teams 'till I hoped I wouldn't never see one again; but this great, blue sea, stretching 'way out to the edge of the world, as you might say—why, I just grudge every minute I'm out of sight of it."

So he went to Martin's Banks to catch fish, and

his boat was hull down on the horizon when the buck-board drew up in front of the hotel. The party was soon seated, and now there was no one to dispute Herbert's right to sit next Helen Thurston. The twelve people were all agreeable, and were grouped quite to their own satisfaction. Then the four horses started, and the vehicle rolled past the hotel and along the "Cornice" road, associated most pleasantly in Herbert's mind with his earliest Bar Harbor drive. On that drive—just to think of it!—had he seen Helen Thurston for the first time; and what had life really been worth before that day? With a thrill of pleasure he realized that she sat at his side, close to him (for the buck-board seat was not over wide), and, with a sudden accession of boldness, he spoke to her of that first meeting.

"To tell you the truth, Miss Helen," said he, "nothing so pleasant has ever happened to me."

"Dear me!" said Helen, gayly, but with a little blush, "that would not seem to argue much for your average meed of enjoyment."

"Pardon me," said he, "I had led a happy life up to that time, but, if my previous pleasures had been multiplied tenfold, that morning would have marked their culmination. Do not think I am paying you verbal compliments. I am only telling you the simple truth. Then, after that, I found the French count always at your side, and I could think of nothing but the philosopher's pendulum."

"Pray, what was that?" asked the young girl. That she liked Herbert, one could hardly doubt;

that she would come to entertain for him a warmer feeling, might be possible ; but there is a time for all things, and he was growing vehement, and they were in a crowded buck-board. She would create a temporary diversion.

“Only a pathetic little story, *Le Pendule Philosophique*, by Mr. Rudolph Lindau, a brilliant German whom I have had the pleasure of meeting. He has been successful merchant, soldier, and *savant*, and is now doubly successful diplomatist and author. You must read the tale for yourself. A poor fellow who has once been happy and then driven almost crazy by disappointment and grief, arranges a clock face with gradations of feeling marked thereon in place of numbers. He says that, when the pendulum had been raised to happiness, it was natural that it should swing over to despair.”

“Who is talking about despair, on this lovely day, and in this merry company?” cried Mrs. Renton, who had placed herself between Seaton and Warrington for the outward drive, and whose quick ear had caught the word. “Mr. Somers, that will not do at all, unless, by the way, you were talking about your despair at the approaching end of the Bar Harbor summer. Helen, my dear, if he be miserable you ought to console him.”

Then the conversation became general, and, with hum of voices, and laughter, and badinage, and scraps of poetry and song, the time sped away and the vehicle rolled on over Town Hill and toward Somesville. At the latter place but a brief stop was

then made, and a new departure taken for Beech Hill. From the crest of this eminence, somewhat laboriously climbed, the party looked down a sheer perpendicular wall of rock to the surface of Echo Lake. As usual, they made futile attempts to throw stones far enough to reach the water without striking the cliff, and they ventured perilously near the edge. Herbert shuddered as he saw Helen do this, and he interposed with an earnestness and firmness which could hardly have been displeasing to the object of his solicitude. Then they returned to Somesville, where once more the hospitable board was spread for them, and the neat handmaidens ministered to their wants and laughed quietly at their jokes.

"My friends," said Mrs. Renton, "forget that this is our last meeting, and cherish life while yet the taper glows. Seaton, you must amuse me, or I shall have a fit of the blues myself over my impending departure. Mr. Warrington, what is the matter?"

"Eh! my dear madam? Oh, nothing, I assure you, 'pon honor. The young person asked me if I would have some extraordinary American dish—'succotash.' I dare say it's not so nasty, but we don't have it at home, you know."

At the conclusion of the dinner, most of the party strolled toward the water, the little harbor constituting the uppermost extremity of Somes's Sound. Here Herbert found himself with Helen, and no one else near; and then it occurred to him to tell her of the ring, and its finding. She listened with the ut-

most interest to the curious narrative. When Herbert began his recital, he had a vague purpose—born of newly-found confidence—of telling her the whole of the ring's early history, including the pleasant episode of its placing upon the finger of a beautiful maiden (how much more beautiful was she, Helen, at that moment, thought he, than could the damsel of old time have been!), but at the critical point his courage failed him. He told her of the gem flashing on the finger of the doughty knight who scaled the walls of Jerusalem; of its career in the civil wars of France; the pathetic story of the Jesuit and his mission; and the strange, almost incredible circumstances of its finding, on the southern shores of the inland sea on which they were looking at that moment. Only of the pleasant idyl of its happy dwelling in the possession of the fair Norman girl did he not tell her. More than once the words were on his lips, but something held them back. Helen questioned him with eagerness about the details of the story, seemed pleased that she had been made his confidante, and readily promised to keep the matter to herself. And might she see the ring ere long? Of course, Herbert told her. He had not dared to carry it about his person, but left it in Ramsay's care.

"Think what it is to have a friend like that, Miss Helen," he was saying, as the summons came for the reassembling of the party. "He insisted upon my making the search, and now upon my keeping the ring, as it may bring good fortune to me."

"In which hope, Mr. Somers," said Helen, in her arch way, as she raised herself up by the aid of his hand, "all your friends will assuredly concur."

"Ah," whispered Herbert to her as the others joined them, "there is one of those friends who has more to do with that fortune than all the rest put together."

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Seaton, when the party had gathered on the piazza and were waiting for their buck-board, "I am sure I but echo our universal sentiment when I say that we, whose lines have fallen for this summer in so pleasant a place as Bar Harbor, owe a great debt of gratitude to Mrs. Renton. In after years, in distant places, and in far-off countries, when we are widely scattered, engrossed in the cares of life, perhaps in trouble and misery, shall our thoughts turn to the peaceful days of this pleasant summer—and one reason why the summer has been pleasant and the days peaceful is that Mrs. Renton has managed our excursions. The world, ladies and gentlemen, has produced many great divines, soldiers, travellers, statesmen. How many persons has history named who could organize a successful picnic? Yet, once and again, do we all bear witness, has our brilliant leader of to-day made up parties where every one had his or her favorite seat, there was no quarrelling, there was enough to eat and drink, no accident nor *contretemps* occurred, and—last and most wonderful—nobody backed out, and everybody paid his share

Ladies and gentlemen, I propose three

cheers for Mrs. Renton," and they were heartily given.

"Thank you, dear friends," said the lady. "If I talk to you I shall probably cry, and that won't do. Now, speaking of seats, I want to make a change in their arrangement on the way home."

This change brought Herbert Somers still next to Helen, on the right-hand end of the seat second from the driver. The homeward route was not the one by which they had come, but the Eagle Lake Road; and all thought that a pleasanter drive had never been taken than this, on the perfect afternoon, with the slightest reminder of autumn in the air. Again were there songs and recitations; then all seemed to feel the quieting, soothing influence of the peaceful scenes about them, and the general conversation flagged. At the foot of a hill, in a secluded portion of the road, Seaton and Warrington proposed making the ascent on foot, and they fell behind as the horses, after the Mount Desert fashion, started their climb at a gallop. Helen Thurston and Herbert had sat silent for some time. When the vehicle was about half-way up the hill, they heard one of the party ask another:

"Did you notice what Mr. Seaton said about our looking back to this calm, restful summer? I often think of that. See what an idea everything about us gives now of peace and repose, of ——"

The horses stopped as if shot; there was a scream from Mrs. Renton, and exclamations of surprise, alarm, and terror from some of the others. From

behind a rock had sprung a man, who covered the party with two revolvers. He was shrouded from head to foot in a large, loose cloak, and masked. He came quite close to the buck-board, and spoke in a hoarse, guttural voice.

"Hold up your hands," said he. "Now, *quick*, your money and jewelry, or your lives!"

Who knows the wondrous speed of thought? Why do we speak of the velocity of lightning as remarkable, when we reflect upon the marvellous quickness of mental processes and their consummation? In a few seconds, Herbert Somers' alert, well-balanced, trained faculties had done their work. He had seen the exact situation of affairs, had made his calculations, remembered the judge's two friends and their devices, and determined upon his course; and at the same time his heels were pressing against the narrow floor of the buck-board as if "with a vicious intention of crumpling the wood to fragments;" and all the reserved strength of his powerful frame was gathered under his broad shoulders. He had not moved an eyelid, nor had the easy, pleasant expression of his face changed; but, in an inappreciably short space of time from the second the last word left the highwayman's lips, he made a mighty spring for the fellow's throat, between his arms, and under his guard! He carried him down backward with hands uplifted, and one of the weapons was discharged in the air. Another instant, and, clutching the ruffian's throat with the fierce grip of his left hand, Herbert, with two blows of his right,

struck both revolvers from his grasp. It is commonly said that men, when assaulted or insulted in the presence of the other sex, naturally abstain from resenting the injury, out of regard for their companions; but this young fellow was made of sterner stuff, and now no one knew this better than the beautiful girl from whose side he had sprung to defend her. Amid all the cries of the others (of which Herbert was as unconscious as if he had been hundreds of miles away), she sat perfectly still, and a little pale.

The struggle, after the first, was one-sided, and the men left in the vehicle had hardly time to go to Herbert's assistance before it was needless for them to do so. The ruffian gasped out a surrender just as Seaton and Warrington appeared. The former acted almost as quickly as Herbert.

"Warrington," said he, "don't ask any questions, but jump in and take care of the ladies. Make the man drive like chain lightning to the village, and stop, or get in some way, the first light vehicle you can; hire it, and make some one drive it back to us here. Ladies, it is all right now. Don't be alarmed; Mr. Somers and I are good for a dozen wretches like this. Now, Warrington, get on—get on. Stop one moment, though. Driver, have you a couple of hitching straps? Yes, those are good; let me have them. Now you are all right. Good-bye, and away with you."

Warrington had put his glass in his eye, and looked very much bewildered at first; and it was

clear that he disliked such unconventional doings very much; but he had no lack of pluck and, when he comprehended what was asked of him, rose to the occasion. He took charge of the party, and soon had the buck-board out of sight. Meantime, Somers had made the robber turn on his face, and secured his arms with the straps borrowed from the driver. The young fellow was not even breathing hard, but there was a little glare in his eye, to show that he had been in action.

The mask, firmly secured, had not fallen from the man's face. Herbert loosened and removed it, and there appeared the well-remembered features of the *soi-disant* count!

"Well, upon my word," said Seaton, "this is truly refreshing. A member of an old French family, an official of the Foreign Office, turned highwayman and *filibustero*. Oh! Herbert, can you not imagine the chagrin of Wilcox, and the look on Shortman's face, when they hear of this affair!"

"Seaton," said Herbert, "as long as this is an acquaintance, let us untie his arms. You can pick up the revolvers, and, with one in the hands of each of us, he cannot escape. Turn over again, count, and I will take off the straps. There, now you can stand up and stretch yourself."

The man did so, with evident relief; then he turned to the two friends, with an amused expression on his face.

"I hope you bear no malice, gentlemen," said he. "For myself, I do not. I took all risks, and you

fought me fairly, from first to last. I did not mean to harm any one, but I thought no resistance would be offered."

"I am sorry to see a man, as clever as you are, engaged in such business," said Seaton.

"What would you?" replied the highwayman. "I must live, and my other plans had all been defeated. As your countrymen say, 'the world owes me a living,' and I meant to make that living as good as possible. I care not for social laws; they are wrong and unjust. What was I, a year ago? The servant, the lackey of the Count de Meaubré. I knew more than he, had more brains, more force; yet the accident of birth and the tyranny of wealth and capital made him my master. This is the land of the free, one told me; the land of equality, where the humblest may rise to be the ruler of the nation, and all social distinctions are obliterated. Bah! I have tried it. In no country in Europe care they for rank and title as here. *Ma foi*, I have proved this. At honest labor I would have starved. I called myself a count, and I had the world at my feet. I have been entertained and flattered and adulated. Fair ladies have smiled upon me, and given me the best of dinners and the pleasantest of drives. Men have made me welcome on their yachts and in their clubs, and humbled themselves before me. What would you, I say? I have greatly enjoyed myself. I have had my dance, and now I pay the piper. *J'ai fait le jeu, j'ai perdu; voila tout!* You will deliver me to the *sergents de ville*, bien en-

tendu. Well, I am ready. Do not fear. I shall make no attempt to escape."

He took his seat on a log, lighted a cigarette and began smoking. The two friends, at a little distance, talked in low tones.

"Have you ever noticed, Herbert," asked Seaton, "how much more agreeable some villains are at times than some truly good men? I positively like this fellow's audacity, and there is something logical in the position he takes. I wish we could have had our young journalist here. A column interview with a bogus count (just caught in attempting the great highway robbery act), with his views on the social system of the United States and the policy of the Administration, would have been simply immense. When I thought him the conventional footpad of the period, or a 'rustler' from the James gang, I sent for a wagon so that we might take him up to the county town and hand him over to some Dogberry or other; but, in consideration of his identity, my purpose is a little shaken. You are his captor, and have a right to decide. What say you?"

"Able fellow, is he not?" said Herbert.

"Dangerously able."

"Did not mean to do any harm to life or limb?"

"None at all, so he says."

"Would make an excellent defence?"

"First-class."

"Unpleasant man on the witness stand, under cross-examination, eh?"

Seaton gave a suspicious cough, then said deliberately :

"Remarkably unpleasant."

Herbert had offered his friend a cigar and lighted one for himself. He blew rings of smoke for some time, then spoke again.

"Seaton," said he, "does the sovereign State of Maine pay you for serving as constable in her jurisdiction?"

"If so, I have not seen the color of her money."

"Do you desire an engagement in that capacity?"

"Not *much*."

The two men exchanged glances. It was evident that they were quite in accord.

"Come over here, Seaton," said Herbert, "where the lord chancellor—I beg his pardon, the count—can't hear us. This will do. Now I want to know what good is to accrue to society at large, or to our friends and ourselves—for whom I care much more than for society—if this fellow be locked up in a Maine jail, after having previously engaged some sharp country lawyer who will delight in giving 'the boys' on the press a sensation, and who will bring out all the doings of his client?"

"I give it up," replied Seaton.

"Then I think we are agreed. Shall I take the floor with our friend here, and you indorse what I say?"

"By all means."

The two men approached their prisoner, who sat leaning against a tree, holding the cigarette between his fingers.

"I suppose you do not care to be called 'count' any more, do you?" said Herbert.

"*Ma foi*, no!" replied the man.

"Perhaps you will tell us your real name?"

"It is Jean Victoire Broiset, formerly of Lyons, late of Paris, and very much at the service of monsieur. I suppose that in a few days I shall be no more a man, but a number, and my clothes will be striped, eh?"

"That would seem to be the natural course of events," said Herbert. "And does it not strike you as rather a poor ending for the summer?"

The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders.

"I do not deny it," said he, "but you cannot take away the past. You may lock me up in the prison, you may brand me as convict and felon; but you cannot remove the fact that I have had my career—short, if you please, but brilliant while it lasted. I suppose they have, in these jails of yours, the daily papers. I shall read them, and when I do see in their chronicles the usual particulars of what is doing in society, I shall say to my brethren of the striped uniforms, '*Regardez donc* ; this man—a great swell, you see—invited me for two weeks to his Newport house. This young lady, ah, *comme elle etait belle*, I knew her well—,"

"There, that will do," said Herbert, interrupting him. "Now I have something to say to you. My friend here and myself are not *sergents de ville*, nor are we responsible for the execution of the laws of the country. When we or those under our protec-

tion are attacked, we fight, and I understand you to say that we fight fairly."

"*Parfaitement*," replied the Frenchman, "and monsieur is *de la première force* in that business, as my poor ribs do testify."

"Very well; we fought and we won. Now we have other matters claiming our attention, in a direction opposite to that in which your path lies. You may follow this road to the first crossing, then take the one leading to the right. Reaching the county town, you can, as in duty bound, surrender yourself to the authorities. When you have served your time and are at liberty, try to make legitimate use of your talents, and lead a better life. Come, Seaton," and the two men started at a brisk walk toward Bar Harbor. The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders and drew a long breath.

"This is indeed fortune the most unexpected," said he. "I am free, I have money, and the road to the West is open. *En avant*, then. But that Somers; I like him. He is a brave man; he is also a *drôle*," and he began to cover, at a long stride, the road toward Salisbury Cove.

When Herbert and Seaton had walked for some distance, the former said:

"Well, old man?"

"Capital!" replied Seaton. "Nothing could have been better."

"Now," said Herbert, "of course we are agreed that we say nothing to a single soul about this. We left him, it is understood, while a messenger went

to the town for a constable. When the buck-board reaches Bar Harbor, of course a lot of those wild youngsters will start a hue and cry, and when they reach the spot (you and I will take a short cut, of which I know, and avoid meeting them) they will find the straps, from which they will conclude he succeeded in extricating himself. We bound him; that is quite true. We left him; that is true, too. I think he will keep clear of his pursuers. Even, however, if they should catch up with him, they will not have the faintest idea that the Count de Meaubré was the villain."

"Herbert," said Seaton, "I could not have planned that better myself."

And, as arranged, so was it all done. Somers and Seaton said nothing at all unless questioned, and then only that they had bound the man to await the coming of an official. If he had managed to escape, they could not help it; they were not policemen. A posse of energetic youths, led by a cowboy from the Southwest (he spent three months of the year in Arizona, and nine at his New York club and in Newport) who donned an enormous sombrero and girded himself with a cartridge-belt for the occasion, found the cast-off straps; and, later on, a very gentlemanly man hired a buck-board at Salisbury Cove to take him to Bangor. The driver liked his customer very much, and reported the receipt of a liberal *pour boire*. So nobody positively knew the truth, nor is it known to this day; and that, gentle reader, is the reason why, in your

visits to Bar Harbor, you do not find out more about the celebrated buck-board robbery. It was a nine days' wonder after it took place, and made all the old ladies very timid about driving. It was even feared that the general popularity of Bar Harbor might be seriously impaired, and something must needs be done to counteract this tendency. Hence was there manufactured a tale that the robbery was all a practical joke, conceived by some young men at one of the hotels; and that Seaton and Somers, finding out who the principal one was, had let him go to avoid a scandal. This story found ready acceptance and credence, and went out into Mount Desert, and Ellsworth, and the parts about Bangor, and is current even unto this day.

When Herbert met Helen that evening, she gave him her little hand and said she had, from day to day, more for which to thank him. She asked him few questions, but looked at him intently with her big, red-brown eyes. They were in a quiet corner of the veranda of her cottage, and no one was near.

"Mr. Somers," said she, "I wonder what has become of that Frenchman."

Herbert bore her scrutiny well, although, as he afterwards told Seaton, she seemed to look through him.

"Dear Miss Helen," said he, "I do not know exactly what has become of him, but I think I can assure you that you will never see his face, nor hear of him, again."

Again her eyes thanked him, and he felt sure she had some idea of what had happened. It was time for him to go ; and, as he rose, she was still looking at him with a lovely expression, half grateful, half timid. The little hand lay temptingly near him ; and, as he took it in saying good-bye, he plucked up courage and raised it to his lips. In another moment, he was walking rapidly up the street. When he joined Seaton, he found the judge with him. This worthy grasped his hand and wrung it hard.

"So you remembered what I told you, young fellow?" cried he. "You made a jump under his guard? Well, the boys thought a sight of you before, but when I go back to Colorado and tell them that you got away with a road agent, why, they'll drink your health over and over again ; and blame me if I won't set it up for them. You come out there once more, and just you see what sort of a reception they'll give you. We'll have a round-up of your old friends in Denver, and they will take you up to Leadville and blow you off there, too. Say, Captain Herbert, did he go down hard?"

"Well, you see, my dear Connor, I had the advantage of him," replied Herbert. "I suppose he never dreamed of anything of the sort, and I was a little quick for him. It was really quite an easy matter to throw him."

The judge was overflowing with praise for the man whom he regarded as his pupil, and in whose prowess he had a just pride. He looked at

him with admiring eyes, and felt the muscles in his arms.

"Yes," said he, "that's all right. Those things do seem easy after they are done, but folks don't 'most always do 'em all the same. Why, Captain Herbert, blame me if I wouldn't rather be able to say that I'd downed a road agent that had the drop on me, and I having no gun, than to be elected to Congress from our State; and the boys will say the same thing, and don't you forget it."

"Say, Captain Herbert," said he, later on, and after some reflection, "was he a big fellow?"

"No," replied Herbert, "not big. He was of medium size."

The judge's shrewd face took on a comically wise expression.

"About as large, say, as that French cuss we fired out of this place the other day, eh?" said he. "All right. I ain't asking no questions, but I just want to say one thing more, for I'm a going to light out of this to-morrow morning."

"Oh! I hope not," cried Herbert. "We cannot spare you yet."

"I'd like nothing better than to stay, and I shall miss you everlastingly," said the judge; "but I must be off. Those chaps in New York want to make a trade, and I must go and meet them. I say a trade ought to be fair for both sides, and those cusses seem to want the whole earth and part of the solar system besides. However, they can bet their sweet lives they won't get ahead of John Connor, not

much. So that's the reason I must go. If I make a deal, too, you know you stand in with me, and I must look after your interests as well as my own. I said I wanted to tell you one thing more, and you shall know what it is. Captain Herbert, I wasn't born yesterday, and I've seen a good deal of the world, and of men. I've lived East and I've lived West. I've been in South America, and in Bar Harbor. I've tramped from Westport to Santa Fé, and from the Platte 'way up through the Wind River Mountains; and blame me if I haven't shoved a hand-cart 'most all the way from the Missouri River to California. I've seen men of all kinds, bad and good, stupid and clever, plucky and cowardly; and maybe I'm conceited, but I've come to think that I know something about 'em. There's men that's got lots of sand, and men that's got *sabe*, as the Chinamen call it, and men that's got push and go; but it's precious seldom that you strike 'em all together. Well, now I'm a going to bid you good-bye, and you too, Mr. Seaton, and hoping I'll see you again before long. And, while I'm a talking, Captain Herbert, I want you to understand what I think of you. I ain't speaking out in meeting, and I ain't asking no questions; but I kind o' think I caught on to the way you put that little job through, from first to last. So what I want to tell you is that, in my opinion, you've got 'em all three, —sand, and *sabe*, and push; and you've got, besides, what's mighty scarce nowadays, and that's a *level head*,"

CHAPTER XIII.

Edgar Ramsay.

It was on an exquisite afternoon that Ramsay and Somers sat, in friendly conference, on a bench at the end of a little wharf looking on the harbor. It was a good day for canoeing, and many youths and maidens had gone out in their frail craft. Upon all of them the boatmen kept a watchful eye, and more than once had they pulled, with strong and rapid strokes, to the assistance of some novice. The air was cool, bracing and electric; and the sun's rays lighted the waters with great brilliancy. Ramsay looked more delicate than ever, and his step was slow and languid.

"Herbert," said he, "I feel as if my work were done here, and I must go elsewhere. You know the old hymn :

" 'I'm a pilgrim, I'm a stranger,
I can tarry but a night.' "

As long as I live I shall never forget my days on Mount Desert. One of the dearest wishes of my heart has been granted me, and I have not only viewed with my own eyes the place where heroes and martyrs labored to plant the standard of the cross, and seen the wonderful ring found, but I have also

been the means of bringing good to a dear friend. Never shall I cease to be grateful for this ; and now, as I have told you before, I would fain press onward. I would see other places where, as at Saint Sauveur, the holy men of old strove to gather the heathen into the Church. They were not of my faith ; doubtless they had many beliefs which are abhorrent to me ; but a wise man has said that ' dying for a cause is far nobler than scolding about it ; ' and, as the pathetic romance of their deeds while living captivates my fancy, so their struggles and their noble endings command my respect. Then, too, my dear Herbert, I seem irresistibly drawn on to search, not, of course, for the mystical city of Norumbega, but for its probable site. Nothing in the story of poor Du Thet fascinates me so much as his intense desire to find that city and write the *In hoc signo vinces* on its walls. How hard we poor mortals are to please ! But a day or more ago, and I thought I had gained all my desires ; now, still longing and unsatisfied, I would have more. As the poet says :

“ ‘ But onward still to ear and eye
The baffling marvel calls,
I fain would look before I die
On Norumbega's walls.’ ”

That is from the story, as you may know, of the poor Norman knight who went, as did Du Thet, and as would I, on this quest. Perhaps I shall, like him, lie dying on the march, and say :

" 'No builded wonder of these lands
My weary eyes shall see;
A city never made with hands
Alone awaiteth me.' "

Come what will, however, I must go."

Herbert looked at his friend with some anxiety. At times, of late, he had entertained fears that, after long illness and with constitutional weakness, his mind was somewhat affected; but then that seemed hardly credible, and he reflected that, at all events, his fancies were simple and harmless ones.

"My dear Edgar," said he, "when your heart is set upon a thing, as upon this, I shall speed you on your way. If you can find the site of Norumbega among the lumber piles on the banks of the Penobscot (late Pentagoët), by all means do it. I shall miss you sadly, but—pardon the frankness of an old friend—is there not some one who will miss you more?"

"Of course I know what you mean, Herbert," replied Ramsay, "but she shares my enthusiasm and my hopes."

Herbert said no more. On a lovely autumn morning a few days later he and Seaton rose early to bid their friend farewell, as he embarked on the *Cimbria* for Castine. The enthusiastic voyager was in the highest spirits, and talked eagerly of the interesting journey before him and the prospect of a speedy return. Just before the steamer cast off he gave Herbert a note addressed to Esther Farley,

and, as the vessel began to move, he called out :
" We three shall soon meet again ! "

" That was rather an ominous expression," said Herbert to Seaton, as they walked to the hotel for their early breakfast.

" Why ? "

" It suggests that beautiful trio of Horsley's that we used to sing years ago :

" ' When shall we three meet again?
Oft shall glowing hope expire,
Oft shall wearied love retire,
Oft shall death and sorrow reign
Ere we three shall meet again.

Though in distant lands we sigh,
Parched beneath a hostile sky ;
Though the deep between us rolls,
Friendship shall unite our souls ;
And, in Fancy's rich domain,
Oft we three shall meet again.

When the dreams of life are sped ;
When its wasted lamps are dead ;
When, in cold oblivion's shade,
Beauty, power, and fame are laid,
Where immortal spirits reign,
There may we three meet again.' "

I shall not forget that trio in a hurry. I once heard it sung by three old friends who were about to part. In a year's time, one had jumped from the deck of a steamer, to rescue a drowning man, and never came up ; the second was killed in a fight

with bandits in Mexico; and the third died of fever at Hong Kong."

"All good fellows and true men, I infer?"

"None better."

"And were doing their duty?"

"Yes."

"Then why mourn? What better could you want for them? Come, early rising has given you the blues, my boy; you will feel better after breakfast. And, by the way, Warrington is quite right when he says that anchovy toast is the only thing fit to eat at this unearthly hour. Suppose you try your influence with the gentle young instructress who waits at our table, and get some slices very thin and very hot, while I find a bottle of the paste."

After breakfast (few being present at so early an hour), the head waiter approached Herbert, and spoke in his low, gentle voice.

"Excuse me, sir," said he, "but I have enjoyed some very pleasant and instructive conversation with your friend who has just taken his leave—Mr. Ramsay—a very highly cultivated gentleman indeed. He told me of the finding of an old ring, with a Hebrew inscription on it. I hope you will not think me too bold in asking if I may see it. I am professor of Hebrew in the college with which I am connected, and I would, with your permission, make an attempt at a translation."

"Come to my cottage at noon," said Herbert, "and you shall see it." This he did; and, after some examination, handed the ring back, saying:

they were enduring that September heat which is particularly hard to bear in the summer-baked houses and streets of the cities. It was indeed lovelier than ever at Bar Harbor. For the most part,

"Nature was tracing with languid hand
Lessons of peace o'er sea and land."

But ever and anon the blasts would come roaring down from the icy north, from "the regions that lie under Arcturus and are lit by the rays of the aurora;" and then Helen Thurston, true daughter of New England that she was at heart, would face them bravely on her long walks, and let them play roughly with the stray tresses of her brown hair, which escaped from under the jaunty hat. In some of these walks, Herbert was her willing companion. They tramped together to see the waves break over the rocks at Schooner Head: they even compassed the trip to Otter Cliffs, where the weird note of the bell-bird struck sepulchral on their ears: and it was on that very home, on this occasion, that she was seized by the fever that and took his eagerly-proffered arm, and leaning lightly on it, keeping step with him in the soft twilight, they traversed the country under the glow of the evening star was on her, and he was looking on her with a softness and tenderness not to be ascribed to Herbert's occasional questions, or to the sympathy with some of the phases of his wandering life. All the while during this blissful walk, as they were approaching the close of one an-

tumn day, she seemed, to his loving fancy, drawn nearer and nearer to him. She was leaning on him, as it were, for help, clinging to him for protection as the darkness came on, and he talked of the wonders of wild nature, and the deeds of wilder man, in the mountain regions and on the great plains. Never had she seemed more feminine, more gentle, more his ideal of a pure and beautiful maiden, than when he reluctantly bade her good night.

Warrington and Seaton departed in company; the latter greatly to Herbert's regret. He was very sorry to go himself, and said so as he wrung his friend's hand just before they cast off the gang-plank. Of course they would meet again soon, and write often in the meantime; and then Herbert made a spring for the wharf, shouting a farewell to Warrington, who, after remarking that Bar Harbor was a "most extraordinary place," settled himself perfectly upright on his seat and folded his railway rug over his knees, just as he would have done between Calais and Paris, Vienna and Buda-Pesth, or (if the Russians would allow an English passenger on their trans-Caspian line) Sarahks and Merv. With the lofty wave of the gloved hand with which he returned Herbert's demonstration, he passes from this story, a typical Briton, diplomatist and gentleman; the well-ripened product of a mature civilization, the very essence of a judicious conservatism.

Next there came the following letter from Edgar Ramsay :

CASTINE, *September* —, 188-.

DEAR HERBERT :

I intended to write you before this ; but I have been absorbed, to the exclusion even of such a pleasant and grateful task as that, in my antiquarian investigations, and my meditations and musings on the past, which each day here spreads more widely and distinctly before my mind's eye. A good deal of this meditation I presume you would set down as pure day-dreaming ; but I do not mind your scolding in the least ; and then you must have discovered by this time that the element of hard common sense has been left out of my composition. Dreamer I always was and shall ever be.

I find this place simply charming. The view from the ruins of Fort George is wide and fascinating. One can see from your own Mount Desert away over to the hills on the mainland ; and the ruins themselves are a genuine relic of colonial times ; but I take more interest in the faint traces of the earlier French occupation and find the outlines of old Fort Pentagoët more attractive than those of the English works. The former are on the shore, close to the water, and not far from the town.

The English colonists in America seem to have been as hostile to this poor little settlement as they were to Saint Sauveur, for they repeatedly attacked it, and it was taken and retaken several times. The history of its earlier days seems less known than that of the little colony on Mount Desert, and there is plenty of scope for the imagination. I love to as-

sign, in my fancy, a site to the ancient hospice of the Capuchins (you know the Boulevard in Paris named for them) and the trading-house of the Baron of St. Castine. There was once a gallant knight of Malta here, and various other men who had gained fame in the old world. In this atmosphere, it is the easiest thing possible to bring before one's self their times and their deeds, and clothe the past of Castine with romance.

I find even more delight than I had expected in my stay in these regions. I am actually living, in spirit, in those old days which so allure me.

I must now keep an appointment with a most kind and enthusiastic local antiquarian, who has been of much assistance to me, and with whom I spend some profitable hours.

September —, 188—.

I have let this letter lie neglected for more than two days, but I have been engrossed, or was engrossed up to last night, in a promising search for the site of an ancient church. Now, however, my thoughts have been turning in another direction; when and how I will proceed to tell you.

I have been able to sleep but little of late, and have begun to fear myself a victim of confirmed insomnia. I cannot bring myself to make use of the usual remedies in the shape of opiates, for I dread a habit of dependence on them. In my ordinary vigils, however, I almost always have happy thoughts; so that, although I am denied my needed rest, I have a compensating enjoyment. Last night I

found it wholly impossible to sleep. I became restless, and tossed and turned for hours. At last I lay quiet, but, as it seemed, still wakeful. I often try repeating poetry to myself in these lonely night watches, and on this occasion I began Mr. Whittier's exquisite poem "Norumbega," from which you have heard me quote, and in which, as you may readily suppose, I greatly delight. I went through it once, then began it again. Then—it does not seem to me that I can have fallen asleep, but, of course, it may be possible—I had a most curious and vivid vision of the mystical city. I saw it rising in majesty from the plain, its towers and battlements overtopping its lofty and massive walls. It was wholly real to me, and I can see it at this moment. Around the city, on three sides, were cleared lands, and beyond them dense woods; on the fourth side rolled the great river. All was as I had fancied it, and you can imagine how this vision affected me. You will tell me—and you will be entirely right—that nothing of the sort can exist in Maine, and that I have not the slightest evidence that it ever did exist; nevertheless, I have an intense desire to visit the spot at or near which tradition places it. Who knows? Perhaps, among prosaic piles of lumber or in the vicinity of a restless and aggressive sawmill, I might find some trace, however slight, of a past and vanished civilization. At all events, I can but try, and I am most strongly impelled to do so.

Then, my dear fellow, I have had what our old schoolmaster used to call a 'leading' in the matter.

In my present state of health I dare not undertake a journey to the woods, or an expedition of any sort, alone. I need a willing, if possible, a sympathetic, companion; and, when I stepped from the door of the hotel into the street this morning, there was our friend, the circuit preacher, just arrived, and standing, carpet-bag and umbrella in hand, as when we saw him last. I was delighted to meet him, for he appealed, on our first acquaintance, most strongly to my fancy and liking, as well as to my respect. We have become great friends, and I have succeeded, I think, in inspiring him with some of my own enthusiasm. Moreover, as his vacation is at hand, he has been good enough to accept my invitation to accompany me on my proposed expedition, and we start very soon.

September —, 188—.

Still again was I interrupted, and now we are off in a few moments; but I cannot but add some words to this long letter. I have been thinking of you, my dear and trusty friend, and of all your goodness to me in the years which, to my great happiness and benefit, we have spent together. I cannot thank you adequately for all your kindness, but I shall never forget it. Whatever may betide, I shall be with you in spirit, and your joys and your sorrows (may the latter be few indeed!) will be mine. As long as I live, when I tread the verge of Jordan, and in the world beyond, I shall be always

Your affectionate friend,

EDGAR RAMSAY.

This letter had a curious effect upon Herbert. It gave him a strong impression that Edgar was laboring under extreme excitement, even, perhaps, under a hallucination. He carried it to Helen's cottage and gave it to her to read.

"How touching!" she said, looking up from its perusal with the least sign of moisture in her tender eyes. "I think it is all very sad. Of course he cannot possibly find what he wants to see, can he?"

"There is no chance of that," replied Herbert, "unless his lively imagination should manufacture some relics of what never existed."

"I am sure," said Helen, reflectively, "that disappointments would be very bad for him just now. I cannot give you a good reason for what I think, but it seems to me that he must be in an excited state of body and mind."

"I am certain you are right," said Herbert; and then they talked of his friend and the letter, later of other things; and the charmed evening, and some charmed days which followed, sped all too rapidly away.

At last there came to Herbert a letter with the Bangor postmark, and addressed in a strange handwriting. He opened it hurriedly and read as follows:

RESPECTED AND DEAR SIR:

I can hardly expect you to remember a humble preacher whom you met some weeks ago, in com-

pany with your friend, Mr. Ramsay, on the steamer between Rockland and Southwest Harbor. I think I told Mr. Ramsay then that I felt sure we should meet again. So has Providence ordered; we have met once more, and it becomes my sad and painful duty to inform you what has happened since that meeting took place. I think you are a strong man, and not easily overcome; but it will shock you greatly to learn that your dear friend (and *my* dear friend too, I feel that I may call him) is no more! But a few days ago he was in my company on a little journey, and, although weak and evidently failing, still joyous and hopeful. Now he has passed through glory's morning gates, and his eyes have seen the King in His beauty. At the risk of writing you a long letter, dear sir, I must tell you the particulars of what has transpired.

I met Mr. Ramsay at Castine, and was greatly delighted to do so; for my heart went out to him on our first acquaintance, and I had longed to know him better. He greeted me like a friend of long years, and with as much consideration as if I had been one of the great people of the earth, instead of a poor preacher. We communed together, and it was a blessed season of refreshment to me. Rarely has it been my lot to meet one so high in the world's estimation and so gifted with what the world has to give, who at the same time was of so gentle and lowly a spirit, and thought so much of heavenly things. His soul was as those of the saints and martyrs of old, in whose steps he would right

gladly have trodden. When I met him, he was searching for the remains of an old church at Castine, but he was filled with an intense desire to go to the shores of the Penobscot above Bangor, and search for some signs of an ancient city, of which he told me interesting traditions. Well knowing that, even if there had ever been such a city, the traces of it must either have disappeared or have been found long ago, I was somewhat concerned at his vehemence, and feared that, in weakness and illness, some delusion might have taken possession of him. I now know well that, if delusion it were, it was born of the near approach of the Angel of Death, who so often brings with him, and to those whose summons lies in his hands, some soothing and consoling insight into things not known of men in rude health and strength.

He begged me to accompany him—a truly pleasant prospect for me—and, it being the time of my brief vacation, I accepted his most kind and generous invitation, and came with him to this city. He seemed to me to be in an exalted state, and to be drawn forward by some secret power; and I think I soon found a solution for this. He told me the beautiful story of the founding of the French mission on Mount Desert, and the life and death of a young priest called Du Thet, who longed to visit the city of Norumbega and labor therein for the salvation of souls. And, Mr. Somers, I am sure that, in the state of mind of which I have just spoken, preceding his departure from this world, he saw this

earnest priest reproduced in himself, and was then, like that faithful soul, urged onward to the site of Norumbega.

We ascended the river and searched, in an aimless and uncertain way, for any place where an ancient city might have stood. I, of course, thought it all labor lost, but I would have done far more foolish things to gratify Mr. Ramsay. As for him, his faith never failed; and, as we prepared to camp one night on the river's bank, he told me he could almost see the domes and spires of the famous city. I noticed then that he was deathly pale and seemed hardly able to stand. In the evening he talked of spiritual things, and his faith shone bright as a star. He also spoke of you, his dear friend, to whom his soul went out. I think that, later on, he must have had some presentiment of what was to happen, for he bade me, if ever death came upon him unawares, tell you he loved you to the last, also give to a certain young lady a note, which he wrote hastily and you will please find enclosed herein.

In the morning I awoke to see him lying quite still. I went to awaken him, and found him cold and dead! He passed away, the doctor thinks, in an attack of heart disease, and in his sleep, without the slightest suffering. I summoned aid, and we sent for the nearest coroner. On Mr. Ramsay's person we found a memorandum directing that, in case of his sudden decease, he should be buried in the nearest church-yard; also a letter to a firm of lawyers in New York, which has been forwarded. I

think you will wish to pay the last offices of respect to your friend.

I doubt not, dear sir, that you will be greatly grieved at what I have told you, but I would point out that what is your loss (and may I not say my own as well?) is your friend's exceeding great gain. He has gone from a world of trouble and suffering to one of perfect and everlasting peace. His soul looked longingly for a knowledge of hidden things, and now they are all open before his eyes. He was a man of wealth, and splendid education, and influence in the world, but his heart was as the heart of a little child, and he is now with the spirits of just men made perfect. He sought for a city in the wilderness, and lo! he has found one not made with hands. He has entered its pearly gates and walked in its streets of shining gold. It seems to me altogether a happy and a blessed thing that he has thus been taken from earth and entered into his rest.

He was worn out and tired, if I mistake not. His alert and active soul had driven and spurred his frail body to the verge of endurance; and he must have longed most earnestly for repose. He was fond of some of our old Methodist hymns, and I think of one favorite verse of his, which I can imagine him repeating as he lay there on his couch of pine boughs in the starlight, waiting, all unconscious, for the summons near at hand. As he gazed at the great dome of heaven, and thought of the unseen world, may he not have cried, in faith and hope,

“ There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.”

I hope you will forgive me for sending you so long a letter. I trust I may soon see you here, and I am, dear sir,

Your servant in the Lord,
THOMAS LONGLEY.

Herbert read this letter through from beginning to end, without missing a word. Then he put it down, lay back in his chair, and let his thoughts have their way. He recalled his long friendship with him now departed ; the days of their boyhood, of their college life, of their travels in company. He remembered that not one cloud had ever come on their mutual affection ; and then he realized that he had lost such a friend as few men ever had. In his inmost heart he knew that Edgar was tired of the world, and that he had lived such a life as would

“ Send
A challenge to its end,
And, when it comes, say,
‘ Welcome, friend ! ’ ”

But for the moment it struck him as inexpressibly sad that such a pure existence had come to a close. After a while he roused himself ; of course he must go to Bangor that afternoon ; he looked at his watch ; there was time, and he would do what had

come to be the most natural thing in the world—go as he had gone before and see Helen and tell her what had happened. He found her at home and read her the letter. She put her handkerchief to her eyes more than once while he was doing so and, when he had finished, looked up with the heavenly light of pity in their depths and the tears glistening under their long lashes, and said :

“ Poor fellow ! ”

“ Miss Helen,” said Herbert, “ Miss Farley should hear these tidings and receive this note from other messenger than a clumsy man. Will you go to her ? ”

“ Oh ! how can I ?— ” cried Helen, “ and yet how can I refuse ? Yes, I will do my best. Give me the note.”

Herbert gave it to her ; thanked her, holding her hand in his, and once more ventured to raise it to his lips as he bade her farewell. Late afternoon saw him on his way to Bangór ; and next day, with but two mourners present, the burial service was read over the mortal remains of Edgar Ramsay ; the earth fell on his coffin ; and the reverent voice of the minister sounded among the pine trees in the words :

“ From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord ; even so saith the Spirit ; for they rest from their labors.”

CHAPTER XIV.

And Last.

HERBERT SOMERS gave to his duties in connection with the death of Edgar Ramsay the full measure of time and attention demanded by his devotion to his friend ; and then he returned without notice to Bar Harbor. Arriving in the morning, and breakfasting at the usual time, he walked up the main street at a rapid pace, and at the first crossing met Helen Thurston, face to face. She, too, was walking rapidly, and evidently had no idea of his return, but was taken wholly by surprise. In a second, there flashed out on her cheek the rosy signal of consciousness, and to her lovely eyes there came a glance of gladness which would have told a joyous story to a lover well versed in woman's sweet and subtle ways. Even to the self-distrustful man on whom it beamed it brought a thrill of pleasure, vague, but infinitely cheering. She was certainly glad to see him ; that was so much clear gain. At the moment he could almost, but not quite, have put into words the feeling that showed itself in his own face, glowing with honest admiration and devotion. Thus, ever and anon, and over and over again, is this little comedy enacted, of doubt and modesty, of inward feeling and outward

repression ; in the present as in the past, the same distrust and confidence, exaltation and depression, hope and fear make a plaything of him whose heart has gone from his own keeping.

The young people strolled in company toward the shore, and then Helen asked Herbert about the task which he had just performed and told him of her trying mission to Esther Farley, and of that poor girl's grief, which she must not publicly make known, but must hide as best she could.

"She went away yesterday," said Helen, in conclusion, "and I really think she will eventually join one of the orders of Protestant sisters and give herself up to good works."

"I suppose there are worse fates and far more unhappy lives than that," said Herbert ; and then he looked at Helen, walking by his side in the flush of her youth and beauty, in the heyday of her charms, and, doubtless, in the innocent consciousness of being perfectly and most becomingly dressed.

"She is like a Watteau shepherdess," thought Herbert, "and daintiness itself, from the crown of her head to the sole of her small and arched foot."

"Miss Helen," asked he, "would you like to be a sister ?"

She looked at him from under her long lashes, and replied :

"Oh ! Mr. Somers, I fear not. I find life so very, very pleasant."

And then there came again to Herbert's mind the lines of Montrose. He seemed to see them

written in large, plain characters on a tablet displayed before his mental vision :

“ He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That puts it not unto the touch
To win or lose it all.”

Well, he *did* fear his fate, he said to himself, and his deserts were uncommonly small ; yet he would be a man and put that fate to the touch—now? No, not yet ; he must “ pull himself together,” as Seaton would say, and summon all his courage to his aid ; but, by all that was good, he would tell Helen before he slept that night, that he loved her with all his heart. This resolution made, he seemed to hold his head higher, and he talked with vivacity and without any sentimentality ; and, as a matter of fact, made himself so very agreeable that, when he bade Helen good-bye at her door, she thought she had rarely passed a more agreeable forenoon. She looked after him, from her window, as he strode along the plank walk, and probably thought how tall and strong and broad-shouldered he was.

At the post-office he found a number of letters awaiting him, and some of them were as follows :

I.

NEWPORT, *October* —, 188—.

DEAR HERBERT :

I have been thinking of you constantly since the news came of poor Ramsay's death. I presume it shocked you very much, and that you mourned

greatly ; yet, if you look at the matter with the aid of both faith and common sense, nothing so good could really have happened to him. I hear he left a handsome fortune, but know not what disposition he has made of it. That will come out directly. I wish I were with you to cheer you up.

I am enjoying Newport to the utmost, having always been appreciative of her perennial charms. We have walked, and driven and sailed ; and, on a day of days, we made a voyage round the Island of Aquidneck in a cat-boat. You know enough about Newport to understand what that trip must have been. We sailed first round by Brenton's Reef, then out to the third beach, and up the Eastern Passage ; and, after a lively fight with the tide at the bridges, we made Narragansett Bay again and ran for home.

You will be immensely interested to hear about an interview I had this morning with a stern, Roundhead-like man from the West, who is, as he says, 'taking in' New England. He is an old soldier, and commanded the troops who served at a recent outbreak of anarchists. He is much troubled that he was not allowed to make a more complete job of the suppression. Not content with having received them with a *feu d'enfer* which sent some scores to kingdom come, he wanted to follow them with platoons into every alley and shoot them down like dogs. "Most merciful in the long run," he says.

The strangest thing which he has told me is that

the man who led the wretches straight up to the guns and fell shouting "*Vive la Commune!*" was one Jean Broiset (lately calling himself the Count de Meaube) ! What say you to that? For my part, I think it quite a fitting end. He played a strong game against society, and I fancy he counted the cost.

I hope all is well with you. May I presume on the privilege of an old friend, and express my trust that you are going to "hit it off" with a certain young lady who shall be nameless? I know her to be a pearl among women; and I know full well how priceless is the affection of such an one. Don't be afraid to ask her. You have everything in your favor, and I wish you success from the bottom of my heart.

Let me hear from you soon, and believe me

Ever yours,

P. S.

II.

NEW YORK, *October* —, 188—.

HERBERT SOMERS, Esq.,

Bar Harbor, Maine:

Dear Sir: We have to inform you that under the instructions of the late Edgar Ramsay, Esq., we have opened the will entrusted to our care by that gentleman some time prior to his late lamented decease. We find that, after provision for certain legacies and bequests, the bulk of his fortune is left to you; and there is a special request that you arrange for the erection of a monument "on the

site of the former Colony of Saint Sauveur, on Mount Desert, in honor of the memory of a French lay brother, Gilbert Du Thet, who there perished, A.D. 1613, fighting for his country and his Church."

We presume that you will make it convenient to come to New York shortly, for a conference, and we place our services at your disposal.

We are, dear sir,

Your obedient servants,

ROGERS & RENTON.

III.

NEW YORK, *October —, 188—.*

DEAR MR. SOMERS:

I am sure you will be glad to hear that my engagement to Miss Westbrook has just been made public. She had expressed her intention of going to Europe, and that was too much for me, so I plucked up courage and "sailed in."

I venture to write you this because, seeing enclosed notice in the *Moon* of yesterday, I thought you would sympathize with me.

With Carrie's and my own best compliments to Miss Thurston and yourself,

Truly yours,

GORDON BROWNING.

ENCLOSURE (*newspaper clipping*).

The engagement is about to be announced of Mr. Herbert Somers, who distinguished himself so much in the late labor troubles, to Miss Helen Thurston. This is the second matrimonial result of the Bar Harbor season.

IV.

(Enclosing same cutting.)

NEW YORK, *October* —, 188—.

DEAR SIR:

Will you kindly inform me if enclosed notice is correct? If it is, I beg to offer my congratulations, having had the pleasure of seeing the young lady; but if that fellow on the *Moon* has really got ahead of me, I shall be mighty badly left.

Yours truly,

ROBERT C——,
Of the *Universe*.

V.

LEADVILLE, COL., *September* —, 188—.

DEAR CAPTAIN HERBERT:

I wrote you from New York and told you what a trade I made for the mine. The buyers sent a sharp to look at it, and he said it was much better than I made it out. I hope we'll close that thing up and get it out of the way, P. D. Q.

There was a piece in the Denver papers about your finding a ring and it bringing you good luck. It isn't a bad thing to strike a streak of luck, but I take more stock in good hard work (and you've done a lot of that) than I do in fortune.

I suppose you are still at Bar Harbor, and natural enough, too. When I was up on the U. P. a while ago, I got a moss agate that just laid over anything of the kind I'd seen before. I send it to you, and want you to give it to the young lady. She's the

sweetest creature I ever laid my eyes on, and it made me feel young again to look at her. The boys miss you, and they were a-hoping you'd come back, but I told them how things were and how I thought that was about the last thing you'd do—to any great extent; so they all send their respects and wish you good luck. Don't ever go back on your old pard. God bless you. Good-bye.

Your friend,

JOHN CONNOR.

The moss agate came also, and a rare one it was.

When Herbert had read all this budget, he was half stunned, half amused, wholly excited. More good fortune had come to him, something of which he had never dreamed—he was Ramsay's heir, and independent! But this startling news could not suffice to turn his attention from the allusions to his relations with Helen. Bless her! he would rather be her accepted lover than heir to the wealth of the Indies. And now the die was cast; his engagement was publicly *announced*, falsely, to be sure, but staring him in the face in cold type; why, something must be done, and done quickly—but what?

And then he remembered his resolution. He had put his hand to the plough, and now there was no turning back for him. He must go through the ordeal, whatever might betide, and the sooner the better. Suddenly he thought of the ring—the ring which was to bring him good fortune, the ring which had

decked a fair lady's finger long before Helen Thurston was born. He went to his room, took it from his desk and held it to the light, in which the stone flashed as always. Then he put it in his pocket and started for Helen's cottage.

Herbert Somers was a strong man—strong in body and mind—but his heart beat rapidly as he walked along the familiar street, and it seemed as if he could almost hear it as he sat waiting for Helen to come down. He knew every detail of the room and furniture, and his eyes roved aimlessly from one object to another; then her light step was heard, and she came in, radiant as the young Aurora, lovely and sweet and gracious. She gave him her little soft hand, and a charming look from her bright eyes, and then she sat down near him. Before he spoke he noticed the material of her dress, the little corsage bouquet, the stray tresses of brown hair catching the sunlight. Then he handed her Connor's present and, taking out the letter, read her the part relating to the agate. Half unconsciously, he read on a few words farther, then remembered himself and stopped abruptly. Without looking up, but with a heightened color, she said: "How kind and thoughtful he is. Does he write more?"

With a slight tremor in his voice, Herbert read to the end. Then he turned, and saw the young girl's face averted and that little hand again resting temptingly near him. He took it in his firm grasp, and the words came quickly to his lips:

"Dear Miss Helen," he said, "that is their rough, kind way of talking. Connor and 'the boys,' as he calls them, are fond of me, and they say things which I have not dared to say. You must know why I have lingered on. I could not go away unless you sent me. Let me tell you something, I beg of you. Here is the ring which poor Edgar caused to fall into my hands. When I told you part of its story, I stopped at a certain point, for I had not the courage to go on. Now I can keep silent no longer, and you must understand my meaning. In all the curious story of this ancient ring, nothing is so charming as the episode of its possession by a fair maiden, on whose finger it was placed by her true knight when he came home from the wars. I have thought that perhaps, like myself, he had lived long away from society, and seen no one for whom he cared, and then there burst upon him, all of a sudden, the beauty of the one woman whom he would love while life should last. He feared to tell her, lest she should reject his suit; but at last he dared to go to her with the ring which he had found, and place it on her finger, thus—" and he put the beautiful trinket on the third finger of the hand which he held in his and she had not withdrawn.

"Dearest Helen," cried he, leaning eagerly forward, "I loved you the first moment I saw you, and I shall love you all my life. See, the ring lies on your finger as it lay on that of a Norman maiden long ago. She let it stay there, but then you are far more beautiful, sweeter, lovelier than all the Nor-

man maidens in the world. Helen, dearest, tell me, shall it bring me the great good fortune of my life?"

Her face was averted, but the color reached her little ear, and, as Herbert leaned farther forward, he caught a half smile on her lips. He drew her toward him, she turned her sweet face, with the light of love shining in her brown eyes, and the pretty head fell on his shoulder.

So the announcement in the *Moon* did not need contradiction after all, and no one took the trouble to verify any particular dates. Herbert sent a line to his correspondent on the *Universe*, and that worthy made up a paragraph in which honest goodwill more than made amends for an announcement of a later date than the unauthorized one of his neighbor. Then the copies of these papers went in all directions, and were read by divers persons. One was opened by Charley Fitzhugh, who was sitting at a table just outside of the Café Durand, opposite the Madeleine, in Paris. He had read the *Figaro* with his fish, and began to peruse the New York paper just as the waiter lifted the cover, with a "*Voilà, monsieur,*" from his *Filet Bearnaisc*. Suddenly Charley changed color, crushed the paper in his hand and, throwing some money on the table, walked at a rapid pace down the Boulevard. Never, in honest Alphonse's life, had any one left a *filet* from the Café Durand untasted in that manner, and his astonishment was only mitigated by the magnitude of his *pour boire*.

Another copy reached that promising young legislator, Mr. William Renton (nephew of Madame), who was elected to Congress, as we all know, in the cause of reform. He opened it during a debate on a bill for the relief of the postmaster at Red Gulch, and while waiting to make his maiden speech on the civil-service bill. Suddenly he turned pale, rose and left the House; and when the great bill came up he was not present, and the "spoilsmen" scored a point.

A third was carried from Tucson on a buck-board away to a lonely ranch in the mountains of Arizona, where that fine young fellow, Jack Haslett, was trying to win fortune. No one knows how he took the news at first, poor fellow; but next day he volunteered to go with the party who were chasing the Apaches; and, when the scouts brought in his dead body, a week later, they found Helen's photograph in his breast pocket. And yet all who knew and loved her blessed her, even in their disappointment, and would break a lance for her then and always.

It was on an exquisite morning that Helen and Herbert looked from the deck of the ferry steamer at the mountain masses of the Desert Isle, showing almost black against the sky. In their shadow had the poor priest stood to his guns and met his fate, nearly three hundred years before; had the summer visitors made merry in later days; had a rare happiness come to the two who now stood gazing upon them.

"And they have looked down upon it all with

grim and unchanged faces," said Herbert; "yet, Helen, my love, I do not believe they could help smiling when they saw you."

She looked at him with that same fascinating, loving glance of her beautiful eyes, and, taking his arm and pressing it close to hers, said:

"You dear old fellow, if it were not for embarrassing all these people, I believe I would put my head on your shoulder."

They stopped in Boston long enough to show to an expert the ring which gleamed on Helen's finger. He uttered an exclamation of surprise:

"I have never seen anything like that," said he. "The stone is a superb specimen of the sard, or sardius, and the setting is of the style of early ages. It is very valuable." And Helen whispered to Herbert:

"I should think so."

And thus the strange adventures and wanderings of the Jesuit's Ring have come to an end. After the centuries of experience of war and strife, after the heroic days of the Crusades, when its wearers hazarded life for the True Cross, and held it flashing high in air as they rode upon the serried ranks of the Saracens; after its possession by the self-denying missionary who laid down his life at Saint Sauveur; after the long sleep on its stony bed on the shores of the Sound; after a life of such romance as the world has rarely known, it has found peaceful refuge on the finger of a pure and beautiful American maiden. Doubtless, could it speak, it would voice

its serene content; for not only is it at rest at last, but it has helped to bring to its new finder and its present possessor, the greatest happiness this poor world can show—that true love which can make troubles light and trials easy, which hopeth all things and endureth all things, which is like heaven itself, and which shall last

“—— Yet still more dear
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.”

THE END.

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